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ABSTRACT

Census data, enrollment statistics, and selected studies/reports regarding adult literacy and literacy education in British Columbia (Canada) were examined to determine the nature and scope, need for, and cost of literacy activities and programs in British Columbia. According to 1986 census data, 17% of British Columbia's adult population lack sufficient literacy skills to cope with everyday demands. The annual costs of adult illiteracy in British Columbia were estimated at $10 billion. New or expanded literacy programs and support services were deemed necessary to empowering undereducated adults, and the special needs of minority groups and the need for research and evaluation, interministerial collaboration, and ongoing monitoring of literacy were designated special areas of concern. Among the study recommendations were the following: (1) community colleges should become community catalysts to improve levels of adult literacy; (2) business, labor, community organizations, libraries, Native organizations, colleges, and schools should collaborate to develop and implement a community-based literacy strategy; and (3) government investment in adult literacy should be increased by 100% for 1990-91 and by lesser amounts for the next 4 years. (Twenty-one references are cited. Appended are the following: 1986 census data for British Columbia; summary of services, needs, and enrollment by college region; and lists of exemplary programs and practices in Canada.) (MN)

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Empowering Undereducated Adults

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Report of
The Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee to
The Minister of Advanced Education,
Training and Technology

December, 1989

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December 7, 1989

The Honourable Bruce Strachan
Minister of Advanced Education,
Training and Technology
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C.

Dear Mr. Minister,

It is with great pleasure that, on behalf of all members of the Committee, I present to you the final report of the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee established by your predecessor, the Honourable Stanley B. Hagen, in September 1988.

We trust that the International Year of Literacy 1990 will afford you many opportunities to demonstrate the commitment of your government and ministry to the cause of adult literacy in our province, as a major thrust of the economic and social policy initiatives so critical to the future of British Columbia.

All members of the committee are most grateful for the opportunity we have had to contribute to the development of public policy in our province. We now look forward to the implementation of the first comprehensive adult literacy strategy in Canada - one that will continue to manifest British Columbia's leadership in this vital field.

Sincerely,

Paul Gallagher

Paul Gallagher
Chairman
Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee

PG/sb

Enc

OPENING THE DOORS TO LIFELONG LEARNING:
Empowering Undereducated Adults

Report of

The Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee

to

The Honourable Bruce Strachan,
Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Report Highlights v

Terms of Reference vii

Committee Members viii

1. THE CONTEXT 1
2. THE CURRENT SITUATION 8
   - Initiatives Throughout Canada 8
   - The Nature and Scope of Literacy Activity in B.C. 14
3. A NEW STRATEGY 24
4. NEW PROGRAMS, EXPANDED SERVICES 32
   - New Literacy Programs 32
   - Expanded Support Services 42
5. SPECIAL CONCERNS 48
   - Minority Groups 48
   - Research and Evaluation 49
   - Interministerial Collaboration 51
   - Ongoing Monitoring of Literacy 56
6. THE NEED FOR A LITERACY POLICY 58
7. THE COSTS 66

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS 71

EPILOGUE 76

Reference Notes 79

Appendices:

I. 1986 Census Data by Census Divisions for British Columbia

II. Summary by College Region of Services, Needs, and Enrollment

III. Exemplary Adult Literacy Programs and Innovative Practices in Canada

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

for

THE MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY

Adult illiteracy is a major economic and social problem for British Columbia.

- The economic future of B.C. will be adversely affected if adult literacy levels are not significantly improved immediately.
- 17% of the adult population of B.C. do not have sufficient literacy skills to cope with the demands of today.
- Needs for improved adult literacy will increase with technological change and an information-based global economy.
- The Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy calculates the annual cost of adult illiteracy to be $10 billion - from industrial accidents, unemployment costs, retraining.

1990 International Year of Literacy should be used to launch a comprehensive adult literacy strategy in British Columbia.

- The business community and general public are keenly aware of the issue.
- The timing is right for government to claim credit for leadership in an area of national and international concern.

THE REPORT, the first of this scope in Canada, provides an extensive analysis of the adult literacy issue in B.C. and presents the details of the strategy to address the need.

It recommends that

- The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology should take the lead role in government to build partnerships in communities throughout the province to increase adult literacy programming.

- The community colleges should be the community catalysts, with community advisory committees, to improve levels of adult literacy.

- Business, labour, community organizations, libraries, Native organizations, colleges, and schools have partnership roles to play in every community.

- Government investment in adult literacy should be increased by 100% for 1990-91 and in lesser amounts for the four following years.

- Government should signify its long term commitment by confirming adult literacy as a government policy priority.

PROVINCIAL LITERACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO THE
MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee will advise the Minister on:

1. Designing an effective provincial strategy to meet the challenge of adult literacy in British Columbia.
2. Mounting an effective awareness campaign on the issue of adult literacy.
3. Innovative and practical approaches to literacy program development.
4. Developing a Ministry policy on adult literacy.
5. Plans for celebrating the United Nations International Literacy Year in 1990.

The Committee will operate through 1990, International Literacy Year. At the end of that year, the operation and existence of the Committee will be reviewed.

The formation of the Committee was announced on September 8, 1988, and it held its first meeting in October, 1988. Since then, the Committee has met bimonthly to satisfy its terms of reference. In addition, the Committee commissioned three research studies. This report is the result of the Committee's work.

PROVINCIAL LITERACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO THE
MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, TRAINING AND TECHNOLOGY
AS APPOINTED IN 1988

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* Committee recorder and report compiler.

1. THE CONTEXT

Meanings and Numbers

In 1978, UNESCO defined a person as illiterate as one who could not "with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life". A functionally illiterate person was described as one who could not "engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development". These are qualitative statements. Educational planners and policy-makers usually need to specify who has or does not have the quality. Thus, attempts have been made to quantify the population. The simplest measure for that purpose was the attained level of schooling. Thus, in the U.S.A., in the 1940s, a functional illiterate was one who had completed fewer than five years of schooling. As the years passed and the demands of everyday life became more complicated, the grade level threshold was gradually raised so that someone who had completed less than grade 9 schooling was considered functionally illiterate. While this definition may make no sense when applied to a particular individual (for the state of being literate depends on the balance between one's literacy abilities and situational literacy demands), it supplies a crude indicator of the size of the target population.

As educational requirements for jobs have increased, even the "Grade 9" level is questionable for adequate coping in today's society. The 1986 Census revealed that 929,140 persons or two out of five British Columbians over 15 years of age had no secondary diploma or certificate. They represent the potential clientele of the province's Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs. While learners will have literacy needs throughout ABE programs, these needs will differ with each individual. The primary concern of the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee is with those learners in greatest need: those at the basic literacy level.

The Committee commissioned a Needs Assessment Report to provide a more detailed analysis of the current situation in B.C. An analysis of the figures for the Census Divisions of B.C. is presented in Appendix I. The education figures are based on the population 15 years and over at the time of the 1986 Census. It should also be noted that, although B.C. had the highest literacy rate in Canada according to the 1987 Southam Survey, it ranked third with Alberta (after Ontario and Quebec) in absolute numbers of functional illiterates. It should be particularly noted that certain groups of people were not included in either the Census or the Southam Survey, eg. Natives and residents of collective dwellings and institutions such as extended care homes, hospitals and correctional facilities.

According to the Southam Survey, 360,000 British Columbian adults - seventeen percent of the adult population - cannot read, write or use numbers well enough to cope with the demands of contemporary society.

According to the 1986 Census of Canada, 256,880 British Columbians over the age of 15 years have less than a grade 9 education.

Expressed another way: about one in every six British Columbian adults has difficulty coping with our print-oriented society; about one in every nine has a limited level of schooling.

These figures point to a sizeable population in need of literacy training. The discrepancy in the two sets of figures arises because of several factors:

1. Some adults complete elementary schooling and even high school without having acquired the basic communication and numeracy skills which are necessary for living in today's world.

2. Skills acquired are lost over time if they are not put to use.

3. Different methodologies were used to ascertain the level of undereducation.

The Southam Survey took the approach that an arbitrary grade level was not an accurate measure of the skills needed to function in today's society. They had a jury panel composed of 25 Canadians from all walks of life who agreed on 10 essential items thought necessary for Canadians to accomplish. Anyone who got three out of the 10 items wrong was considered functionally illiterate. People who got less than three out of the 10 items correct were considered basically illiterate. Southam subscribed to the literacy definition used by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the United States: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential."[1] The definition implies that different information-processing skills are required in different contexts.

The difference between basic literacy and functional literacy is one of degree. Basic literacy refers to learning to read, write and count, whereas functional literacy implies using these acquired skills to learn to further one's own development and that of the community in which one lives.

A Strategic Approach

On the world scene, functional literacy has been linked to community development and non-formal education projects. The success or failure of literacy movements and programs has been related to prevailing socio-political and socio-economic conditions. Mass literacy campaigns have been most successful when they have taken place within a framework of fundamental social change.

In Western societies, with extensive educational infrastructures, literacy, under the general rubric of Adult Basic Education (ABE), has most often been linked to preparation for employment - giving individuals the means to better themselves economically. This orientation tends to ignore other aspects or attributes of literacy. While many people want to improve their literacy skills in the hopes of obtaining better job opportunities, others want to acquire these skills for very different reasons. Some of the needs are very task-specific. To accommodate the different needs means having flexible arrangements in the communities where people live so that access to learning opportunities for all is always a possibility. Community-based literacy programs have become widespread in Canada over the last decade. Programs are rooted in the milieux which are familiar to would-be learners. These milieux can become the bridging points to more formal educational opportunities for those learners ready to take the next step.

Undereducated adults are parents, citizens, taxpayers; many are employed, others are retired or on social assistance; many are quite articulate, others are shy. They are people who have difficulties with reading and writing and calculating. Although some may be reasonably well-off, most are poor. Some specific groups of people among the undereducated are: Natives; immigrants and refugees; ex-offenders; inmates in correctional settings; mentally, physically and developmentally handicapped; youth drop-outs from the school system; single mothers on welfare.

In British Columbia, the mother tongue of most of those requiring literacy training is English. However, for many immigrants, English is a second or additional language and many require English literacy training after the acquisition of oral skills. There is another group of immigrants, however, who are illiterate in their mother tongue. Special instructional strategies have to be employed for this group. Among Native groups, mother tongue literacy, where applicable, should be encouraged before the transition to official language literacy is made. Mother tongue literacy (apart from English) and English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy require special attention.

Becoming literate then means acquiring the necessary reading, writing and other skills which people need to operate in their own personal and social contexts. Once functionally literate, people can become more independent, more confident about making desired changes in their world. And, because different people require different skills, literacy practice has to begin with the learners' needs. From the individual's experiences and realities, meaningful learning activities can be planned and applied. This is the essence of adult education and is the way to open the doors for lifelong learning.

Individuals, however, are nested within several communities, and the larger provincial or Canadian society makes demands of its inhabitants. After consideration and discussion of the various elements affecting definitions, the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee unanimously agreed that:

> A long-term B.C. literacy strategy be developed to provide opportunities for adults in the province to become functionally independent in the communities in which they live and in the larger Canadian society.

Addressing the needs of undereducated adults in British Columbia is an urgent and mounting economic, social and human problem: 360,000 British Columbians deserve better.

An Opportunity for Leadership

The problem of adult illiteracy is not unique to British Columbia. It has been a worldwide concern for a long time, but especially since the formation of the United Nations over 40 years ago. Developing countries have long recognized that literacy training is a pre-requisite to economic and social development. Pacific Rim countries such as Japan and Korea have staked their economic futures on improved education and the results have been evident to the rest of the world.

British Columbians live in a competitive international environment in which lifelong learning has become a necessary and desirable way of life. For the undereducated, however, lifelong learning is only possible when they have the opportunity to acquire the basic skills required in contemporary society. The Fourth UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education in 1985 reaffirmed the importance of the right to learn and stressed that it was not "a cultural luxury to be saved for some future date", but "an indispensable tool for the survival of humanity". They see it not only as an instrument of economic development but as a fundamental human right. The right to learn is:

- the right to read and write;
- the right to question and analyze;
- the right to imagine and create;
- the right to read one's own world and to write history;
- the right to have access to educational resources;
- the right to develop individual and collective skills.[3]

British Columbia took an early lead in Canadian provincial initiatives relating to adult basic education and literacy from 1976 onwards. It has been a leader particularly in the development of curriculum and learning materials. During the 1980s, however, some of that leadership and the efforts in the field were eroded. More recently, though, there is cause for optimism as the 1988 Sullivan Report on the school system and the

Report of the Provincial Access Committee have brought issues of undereducation into sharper focus. In addition, as 1990 has been declared International Literacy Year by the United Nations, the climate is right for new initiatives in the province. We need, however, to focus on the longer term and make an ongoing commitment to the provision of literacy opportunities as the foundation for lifelong learning throughout the 1990s. The balance of this report describes how British Columbia should reassert its leadership in adult literacy.

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION

Initiatives Throughout Canada

An overview of recent literacy initiatives across Canada is outlined here to give a sense of the level and nature of activity taking place elsewhere and to provide some frame of reference for assessing the situation in B.C. Throughout this report there will be further mention of practices from other parts of Canada.

Federal Initiatives

The October 1, 1986 Speech from the Throne indicated the federal government's commitment to working with the provinces, voluntary organizations and the private sector to ensure that Canadians would have access to the literacy skills necessary for participation in an advanced economy. In March 1987, the Solicitor-General announced a major literacy initiative in Canadian penitentiaries. It is estimated that about one half of the federal inmate population of 12,500 is functionally illiterate. In September 1987, the Secretary of State announced the allocation of $1 million for literacy initiatives which included the establishment of a National Literacy Secretariat within the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada. Funds were also made available to the major national literacy non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - Frontier College, Laubach Literacy of Canada, and the Movement for Canadian Literacy - as well as to a number of jointly funded projects with the provinces.

In September 1988, the Prime Minister of Canada announced the allocation of $110 million for literacy initiatives over the next five years. In his address in Toronto on International Literacy Day (September 8) 1988, the Prime Minister said:

> "We need nothing less than a national effort by the federal government, by the provinces, by business and labor organizations, by the voluntary sector, to address the issue

> of illiteracy in Canada. Indeed, the road to literacy will require partnership among all sectors.
>
> .....
>
> The time is long since past when government can sit on the sidelines and leave the issue of illiteracy to the efforts of the voluntary sector."[3]

The federal strategy, as stated, is based on partnerships with a variety of sectors. Apart from the major national literacy NGOs, other national organizations receiving funds for various projects include the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society and the Salvation Army. Joint federal-provincial/territorial initiatives are underway in nearly all parts of Canada. Funds are available for pilot or demonstration projects, but not for ongoing delivery. Other projects funded include research and needs assessment studies, conferences and public awareness initiatives, development of materials, resource networks and provincial coalitions. The disbursement of these funds is commendable and makes possible a whole series of imaginative initiatives. The federal strategy is raising the profile of literacy in the field and in the public consciousness, but it puts the onus more strongly than ever on the provinces for actual delivery of literacy programs.

Examples of Provincial Literacy Initiatives[4]

Alberta

Literacy delivery in Alberta is through a variety of organizations: 4 Alberta vocational centres, 10 community colleges, 5 community education consortia and 50 of the 85 Further Education Councils. The 50 Further Education Councils deliver literacy in 61 communities through the use of volunteer tutors. The coordinators of the volunteer tutoring programs have their own support and resource network - Literacy Coordinators of Alberta (LCA). Experienced coordinators are acting as key resource and support personnel to newer coordinators on a regional basis in the province.

Funds for literacy work in Alberta come from three main sources:

1. Alberta Advanced Education underwrites the costs of the post-secondary institutions and Further Education community programs;
2. Alberta Education through its Extension Services Grants funds adult day and night schools as well as community school programs;
3. Alberta Career Development and Employment provides ad hoc funding for programs sponsored by other organizations and for student support.

Alberta's government will match all federal dollars granted for literacy projects. In March 1989, a joint federal-provincial announcement was made saying that $1.35 million was being made available for 12 major literacy projects in six regions of Alberta. The projects funded include a literacy partnership for Latin American women and their children in Calgary, community tutor training, the production of learner materials based on student writing, a workplace literacy initiative in Edmonton, the recruitment of Native learners and tutors through an outreach worker in the Slave Lake region, a computer based approach to literacy attainment for Natives in Calgary, and the creation of an inventory of present literacy programs, needs, services and resources.

Saskatchewan

Literacy training in Saskatchewan is provided by regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), the Regina Public Library and several volunteer groups. In 1987 the Saskatchewan Literacy Council was established by the Premier and the Minister of Education. It was to have a three year mandate to spearhead a provincial literacy campaign with a threefold thrust:

1. initiate a volunteer-based literacy strategy to help reach 10,000 illiterates over 3 years;
2. develop a communications/public awareness program; and
3. encourage literacy initiatives by the corporate and public sectors.

The Council has a full-time Managing Director and an Advisory body. The federal government contributed $492,000 as its portion of cost-shared ventures for 1988-89 in Saskatchewan. These ventures include: practitioner development; pilot projects for specific target groups; public awareness; research and evaluation of literacy programs and of the media campaign; and the developmental work for the establishment of a literacy foundation. The foundation will acquire private donations for literacy activities and subsequently disburse them to projects.

In September 1988, an agreement between the province and IBM was announced whereby the Principle of the Alphabet Literacy System (PALS) - an interactive basic literacy software program - was to be introduced province-wide. The goal is to reach 5,500 people over 3 years - from 1988 to 1991. The expenditure for installing PALS is $1.7 million. IBM donated $850,000. worth of equipment. Twelve computer labs were to be operational by September 1989. Eight permanent sites are envisaged, the rest of the labs will be mobile. The use of computers is seen as one of several strategies in the overall literacy campaign.

Manitoba

Manitoba provides funding to community groups, school divisions and colleges for literacy and ABE programs. Most literacy programming is done through the community groups. In the 1988-89 fiscal year $420,000. was spent on community-based literacy initiatives. In March 1989, under the federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement $912,000. was announced for literacy initiatives.

Manitoba uses Independent Learning Centres in urban areas for offering flexible literacy programs. It also uses paid part-time tutors to teach in small groups or in a one-to-one relationship in isolated rural communities. The tutors work with a part-time coordinator. Manitoba has had an annual provincial learners' conference since 1986.

Ontario

Since September 1987, the lead ministry for literacy in the province has been the Ministry of Skills Development. There are several literacy-related programs. Basic upgrading or skills training is delivered by 23 colleges through the Ontario Basic Skills (OBS) Program. This program requires that at least 20 percent of the funding be applied to Levels 1 and 2 (ie. the most basic training levels).

The Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace (OBSW) Program provides funding for employer or labour-sponsored training at the worksite or other convenient locations. Funding for this program is about $3 million annually. Community-based adult basic literacy programs are funded through the Ontario Community Literacy (OCL) Grants Program. In 1988/89 nearly $4.5 million was spent on 137 organizations. This total included funding to four provincial literacy networks - Ontario Literacy Coalition (Anglophone), Ontario Native Literacy Coalition, Le Comité d'organisation d'Alpha-Partage (Francophone Coalition) and the Ontario branch of Laubach Literacy of Canada. The Community Literacy and Workplace programs have a combined staff of nine persons including the Senior Manager but excluding any clerical staff. There is a coordinator for each of the community program divisions - Anglophone, Francophone, Native, Special Needs and staff to look after the workplace programs and training and development needs.

Ontario has an Interministerial Committee comprised of 6 ministries most closely connected with literacy training, ie. the Ministries of Skills Development, Education, Citizenship, Corrections, Colleges and Universities, Community and Social Services. The Ministry of Skills Development also has a Special Assistant responsible for literacy in the Minister's Office.

The Ministry of Education has given grants to school boards for ABE since September 1982. These grants fund adult day schools, night classes and classes in a variety of community institutions.

On May 24, 1989, an announcement was made in Toronto to the effect that $4 million was being allocated to provide a new literacy and language training resource centre in Ontario. The centre will provide reference and teaching materials in English and French for practitioners and trainers working with adults. It will cover literacy, as well as English and French as a second language training. Funding is coming from the federal government and from the provincial ministries of Skills Development, Citizenship, and Culture and Communications. The site is to be leased from the City of Toronto for a nominal sum and the centre will be operated by the Metro Toronto Library Board.

Other Provinces and Territories

The remaining provinces and the territories have all recognized the illiteracy problem and have developed or are planning new initiatives. In March 1989 the following joint funding initiatives were announced with the federal government:

New Brunswick - $1,150,000. to fund 14 literacy projects;
Newfoundland - $500,000. to fund 15 literacy projects;
Nova Scotia - $341,000. for four major projects;
Northwest Territories - $500,000. for five literacy projects;
Yukon Territory - $266,000. to fund the CALL program (Community Adult Literacy Leadership).

Not all the funding is on a 50/50 basis. In some cases the private sector is also involved. For instance, IBM Canada is supplying equipment and software to the Yukon program. Abitibi-Price is involved in a project in Newfoundland.

Non-governmental Organizations

The three national literacy NGOs are: Frontier College, Canada's oldest adult education institution (founded in 1899); Laubach Literacy of Canada; and the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL). The first two provide direct service while MCL acts as an umbrella and networking organization. Each of these three organizations has done its own advocacy and public relations work, but in recent years they have all come together with other national organizations to form a committee for joint advocacy and other initiatives. MCL gives the leadership to this committee.

Most provinces have provincial literacy associations or coalitions which bring together practitioners for networking, advocacy and support. Such organizations may also provide advice to their lead ministries on literacy matters.

The Nature and Scope of Literacy Programming in B.C.

The Institutional Picture

Most of the literacy instruction in the province is currently delivered through the educational institutions. British Columbia has a literacy delivery infrastructure in place in its 15 community colleges. In addition, about 20 of the 75 school districts in B.C. offer literacy and/or ESL programs. To obtain a more accurate picture of the level of ABE activity in each college region, the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee commissioned a Needs Assessment Study. The findings of the researcher have been incorporated into Appendix II of this report[5].

Some explanatory and cautionary notes on the interpretation of the statistics are presented in the Appendix. However, some points regarding assessment and calculation of numbers should be stressed here.

1. The survey undertaken for the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee is only a snapshot of a situation now frozen in time. As soon as college and school district semesters or terms end, the picture changes. Program offerings may be affected by changes in funding policies and practices. Populations in small communities may change quickly, forcing changes in educational offerings in those areas.

2. It is extremely difficult to obtain precise numbers of people enrolled in literacy/ABE programs. Statistical gathering methods required by the Ministries of Education, and Advanced Education, Training and Technology are for funding purposes and in the form of full-time equivalent seats in programs (FTEs). It is conceivable that one FTE, for example, could equate with four (or more) actual students attending a literacy program on a part-time basis.

3. Another difficulty in obtaining overall precise numbers is the nature of literacy programming itself. Programs are offered in classroom settings in institutions, in small groups on or off campus, in one-to-one tutorial arrangements in the home or other settings, and in adult learning centres on a flexible drop-in basis.

Volunteers are used in many instances to help in instruction or to be the main agent as in one-to-one tutoring. It is estimated that at least six colleges and ten school districts have used volunteers regularly either as the main agent of or as an adjunct to basic literacy training programs. It is difficult to equate the service provided in a one-to-one tutorial arrangement in the home with participation in a regularly scheduled class in an institution.

For all these reasons, the numbers given in the Appendix should be treated with caution.

Other Agencies

There is a sprinkling of other agencies which offer literacy programs. The group includes non-profit organizations, federally funded pilot or employment programs and private trainers. Most of these programs are found either in Vancouver or Victoria. In addition, literacy programming is offered in both federal and provincial correctional facilities in the province.

The results of the survey of these other agencies is briefly presented here. Although some statistics are attached, the same cautions for interpretation apply as with the institutional statistics.

Four community groups in B.C. (Vancouver's Carnegie Centre and the Learning Front, the Victoria READ Society, and Project Literacy Kelowna) were serving 551 people in the current year and using 158 volunteers.

Forty-four (44) learners were involved in literacy programs in provincial correctional institutions[6].

Three hundred and twenty (320) learners were involved in basic and functional literacy programs in the federal correctional institutions compared with 105 involved in the grade 10 completion program, and 90 in preparation for the grade 12 equivalency challenge exam (GED).

Fifteen immigrant service societies in the province provide English language training for 1,444 beginners and for 165 people at the beginner-intermediate level, 1,064 at the intermediate level, and 82 at the advanced level.

Native groups were sent questionnaires, but there was a low rate of return - only five out of thirty. Of those replying none offered literacy training at the most basic level (0-4), although there were small numbers of learners in the grade 8 completion level.

Unions. There are currently two known program delivery initiatives:

1. The Canadian Farmworkers Union sponsors a literacy program for its members, many of whom are illiterate in their mother tongue. Trained volunteers meet with small family groups in members' homes during the winter months to teach basic English skills. In the past year there were 10 beginners, 10 intermediate, and 5 advanced level students. Ten trained volunteer tutors are involved.

2. The Hospital Employees Union, the Royal Columbian Hospital and Douglas College have jointly initiated the Basic Skills Upgrading Program at the hospital. The program began April 1, 1989 and is available to any employee of the hospital free of charge each afternoon at the hospital.

In addition, two other groups are conducting literacy needs assessment studies - the Council of Forest Industries, and the B.C. Federation of Labour.

Open Learning Agency (OLA) provides ESL courses at a beginner level. Adult learning centres, Native education centres, and correctional institutions use OLA courses for ABE upgrading, although no OLA courses are available for basic literacy. The total number of students taking ABE courses is 3,116.

YES Canada. Originally funded by the Innovations program under the Canadian Job Strategy, YES Canada provides individualized literacy and upgrading to youth. Students with little or no reading who apply for admission to YES Canada would be referred elsewhere. Of the 371 students who have been enrolled over the previous two years, 11 have scored at the 0 to 4 level and 96 have scored at the 4 to 8 level on intake assessments. This computerized literacy and upgrading program takes students through grade 12 completion.

Private Trainers. From time to time private trainers offer literacy skills upgrading programs.

This description of the B.C. literacy scene is not complete without mentioning the work of the provincial ABE organization. The Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. (ABEABC) is the professional, networking and advocacy organization in the province. It is mainly made up of practitioners and individuals interested in ABE. In recent years the ABEABC has spearheaded literacy-related projects including:

- the Adult Literacy Contact Centre,
- Project Literacy B.C., and
- dialogues on literacy and the workplace.

The Adult Literacy Contact Centre (ALCC) is an information and referral service which was established to provide answers to questions about the literacy situation in B.C. It has received federal-provincial funding for its operation since the beginning of the joint initiatives. It now has a toll-free number province-wide and refers callers (volunteers and learners) to programs in their communities. Other services provided include: publication of the Directory of ABE programs, a regular Newsletter, promotional literacy materials and copies of News Releases, Speeches and the like pertaining to literacy.

Project Literacy B.C. (PLBC) started in the spring of 1986 as a provincial campaign to promote public awareness about the need for adult literacy. Initial organizing work was done by the Canadian staff of KCTS TV in response to the Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) campaign which was to begin in the fall of 1986. The leadership and ongoing work of PLBC was provided by the ABEABC and was concentrated in the Lower Mainland. As awareness of the problem increased, other B.C. communities expressed interest in being part of the solution. A provincial meeting of those interested was held in November 1988. Currently, there are seven "Project Literacy" groups around the province many of which are in process of incorporating as non-profit societies. Some of these are or will be providing direct service through volunteer tutors. The ABEABC has received a grant from the National Literacy Secretariat to facilitate the development of a truly provincial "Project Literacy B.C."

Conclusions from the Needs Assessment[7]

From the Needs Assessment Study commissioned by the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee, the following conclusions were made by the researcher.

- In the province of B.C., only the Gulf Islands appear to have no need for additional literacy programs.
- Wait-lists exist in many college programs, particularly for ESL classes.
- Areas with the highest rates of illiteracy (Indian reserves, Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Whalley area of Surrey) have highly inadequate service in relation to the need.
- Minority groups (Natives, immigrants, refugees, and prisoners in provincial correctional institutions) are desperately in need of literacy training.
- Employment and Immigration Canada, and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs provide no funding at the

basic and functional literacy levels in their pre-employment training programs for Native people.

- Increasing numbers of immigrants and refugees in the past two years have put tremendous pressure on existing programs and have increased wait-lists in the college ESL programs.
- Federally funded programs for immigrants and refugees have such restrictive criteria for admission that many potential learners are completely excluded from the programs.
- The number of inmates in provincial institutions requiring literacy instruction is not known by prison officials and such information is not included in the Census. The need for stable programs with more instructors is apparent to respondents to the questionnaires.
- Outside of major centres, the learning disabled adult may have no access to appropriate assessments or adequate literacy training.
- Depending on the nature of the disability, a physically disabled adult may have very limited or no access to literacy training.
- Unstable funding for literacy programs causes problems of student and instructor recruitment, particularly in small communities.
- Trained volunteers are playing an important and essential role in many literacy programs.
- Some non-profit societies are running effective literacy and ESL programs, often under adverse conditions.
- Community-based programs which operate outside of the usual institutional settings are seen as a means to effectively reach those who are not drawn to currently existing literacy programs.

The need for more literacy training and more ESL training in the province is apparent from this Needs Assessment Study. It should be pointed out that the need for English language training is more immediately obvious than the need for literacy training. Many immigrants and refugees belong to visible minority groups whose mother tongue is not English. The literacy needs of those who were born in Canada are not so immediately obvious, but all studies stress that it is the Canadian-born adults who comprise the major proportion of the undereducated adults.

The B.C. Investment in Literacy Training

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology currently spends $4,500,000. to fund literacy training up to grade 8 completion.

When the federal literacy initiatives came on stream in 1987, B.C. was eligible for its portion of cost-shared funding. In September 1988, each level of government contributed $112,500. for literacy initiatives in the province. Money was allocated for the Adult Literacy Contact Centre, for local literacy learners' conferences and for two new projects - a pilot literacy in the workplace project, and the development of an evaluation process for literacy programs using volunteer tutors. Later, in May 1989, an additional $60,000. was made available on a shared basis by the two levels of government to support research on literacy in B.C.

The Access for All announcement on March 20, 1989, holds hope for the future. Literacy and Native education initiatives were mentioned. For the 1989-90 fiscal year, the number of places in institutionally funded ABE programs has been increased by 478 (7%). One fifth of that total is directed towards ESL increases. The government has lowered the instructor-student ratio for literacy classes from 1:18 to 1:14.5. The funds for the Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Plan (ABESAP) were doubled - from $500,000. in 1988-89 to $1,000,000. for 1989-90. In addition, an amount of $650,000. has been allocated for other adult literacy activities in the 1989-90 year. Some of this funding is eligible for cost-sharing with the federal government, thus increasing the initiatives in B.C. for 1989-90[8].

The Access for All initiative is a six-year initiative beginning in the 1989-90 fiscal year. There is much still to be done in the literacy field. International Literacy Year (1990) provides an excellent opportunity to highlight literacy program initiatives and activities. Indeed, on International Literacy Day 1989 (September 8), the Honourable Stanley Hagen acknowledged literacy as a program priority area of the B.C. government. However, the commitment to providing educational opportunities for undereducated adults must be long-term. The Committee strongly concurs with the Minister's statement that "the goal of full literacy is a key component in a long-term educational strategy"[9]. A five-year literacy plan would be a reasonable start to improving the situation by the millennium.

There are other players in the literacy field who are not funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. School districts are funded through a fiscal formula of the Ministry of Education to provide adult programming. Some additional funds may be supplied from local taxes. However, the funding is not specifically earmarked for literacy programs.

The Current B.C. Situation - Summary

A sound infrastructure is in place in the province for the provision of literacy and language training through the colleges and school districts. All parts of the province fall within the catchment of a community college region. Thus, theoretically, no community should be unserved.

Community colleges provide for the learning needs of undereducated adults in an adult environment. School districts often provide adult learning centres separated from school level programs so that an adult environment may be fostered. One-to-one tutoring takes place in settings of mutual convenience for the adult learner and the tutor.

There is considerable professional expertise in the province in both colleges and school districts for addressing literacy program delivery and support issues.

However, experience and the research literature show that existing institutional programs usually attract those adults who, with a little help, can make it eventually on their own. They represent only the "tip of the iceberg". For harder to reach adults, new strategies are required to encourage them to come forward. Thus, the present structure and offerings need to be expanded and improved upon. There needs to be direction and coordination of a new provincial strategy. Compared with some other provinces, certain potential community partners are relatively inactive in B.C. literacy programs - labour, business and industry. An overall strategy needs to involve these partners and other sectors of society to make literacy for all a reality.

34

3. A NEW STRATEGY

The Need for Leadership

Adult illiteracy is not just an educational issue. For most undereducated adults it is one of many problems embedded in a variety of social and economic conditions. Because these problems overlap into so many different areas of society, any long-term solution has to take into account the relationships and ramifications of the overlaps. A serious commitment is required by government and society. New policy directions will have to be established for carrying out the strategy. The lack of policy may result in competition rather than cooperation between providers of literacy programs. The needs are pressing and the problem large, and not everything can be done at once. Priorities may have to be established within a long-term commitment. Strong leadership is required. The obvious lead Ministry within the British Columbia government is the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. The Committee therefore recommends that:

1 • **The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology acknowledge responsibility for, exercise a leadership role, and coordinate efforts in the development and provision of literacy programs and support services in the province.**

The Report of the Provincial Access Committee (1988) identified Literacy and Adult Basic Education as a priority concern and recommended the establishment of a provincial literacy advisory committee. The Committee recommends that:

2 • **The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology declare adult literacy an area for immediate action and a priority program concern for the next five years.**

Such a program will need personnel to guide and coordinate activities. Thus, it is also recommended that:

3 • **There be literacy staff within the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) to offer**

leadership and coordination of literacy-related activities in the province. A start in this direction would be to convert the current interim position of full-time provincial literacy coordinator into a continuing one.

Immediate Objectives

A systematic and sustained awareness campaign in the province is crucial to gain the cooperation of potential partners in the literacy strategy and ultimately to attract undereducated adults into literacy programs. Elements of such a campaign could include such things as:

- public service announcements on radio and television;
- newspaper advertisements and articles;
- posters and bumper stickers;
- getting Chambers of Commerce and large municipalities involved in awareness efforts and promotion of literacy in the workplace;
- getting corporate sponsorship of literacy-related promotions.

The aim of the campaign would be to get literacy on the public agenda as a major issue and to keep it in the public eye. Something akin to the Participaction campaign and the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Awareness Program is envisaged by the Committee.

The awareness campaign could be initiated in International Literacy Year - 1990 - but it should be regarded as a beginning of a commitment to adult literacy programming over the longer term, not a one-time initiative. Experience has shown that whenever the level of public awareness is increased, so has the demand for programs. A serious public awareness campaign must be accompanied by an overall strategy for program delivery in the province.

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The Committee recommends that:

4 • **MAETT allocate funds annually for each of the five priority years to promote public awareness of the issues related to undereducated adults.**

Awareness campaigns will be effective only to the extent that undereducated adults and the general public are aware of new learning opportunities. Thus, to make awareness campaigns effective, the Committee recommends that:

5 • **An information and referral centre be sustained as a primary provincial vehicle for encouraging potential learner contact and referral as well as for providing information to the public at large.**

The Committee recognizes the existence of a good infrastructure for the delivery of literacy programming in the province, but has noted that not all colleges offer programming at the most basic literacy level. In order to emphasize the importance of literacy programming in the colleges, the Committee recommends that:

6 • **Further recognition be given to the need to provide lower instructor-student ratios in literacy programs in colleges.**

7 • **Colleges make literacy a priority program area and seek to bring into line as quickly as possible resources dedicated to literacy instruction consistent with the illiteracy percentages in the college region.**

8 • **MAETT make provision for significant increases in the capacity of the post-secondary system to deliver literacy instruction in 1990-91, and for further significant increases in subsequent years.**

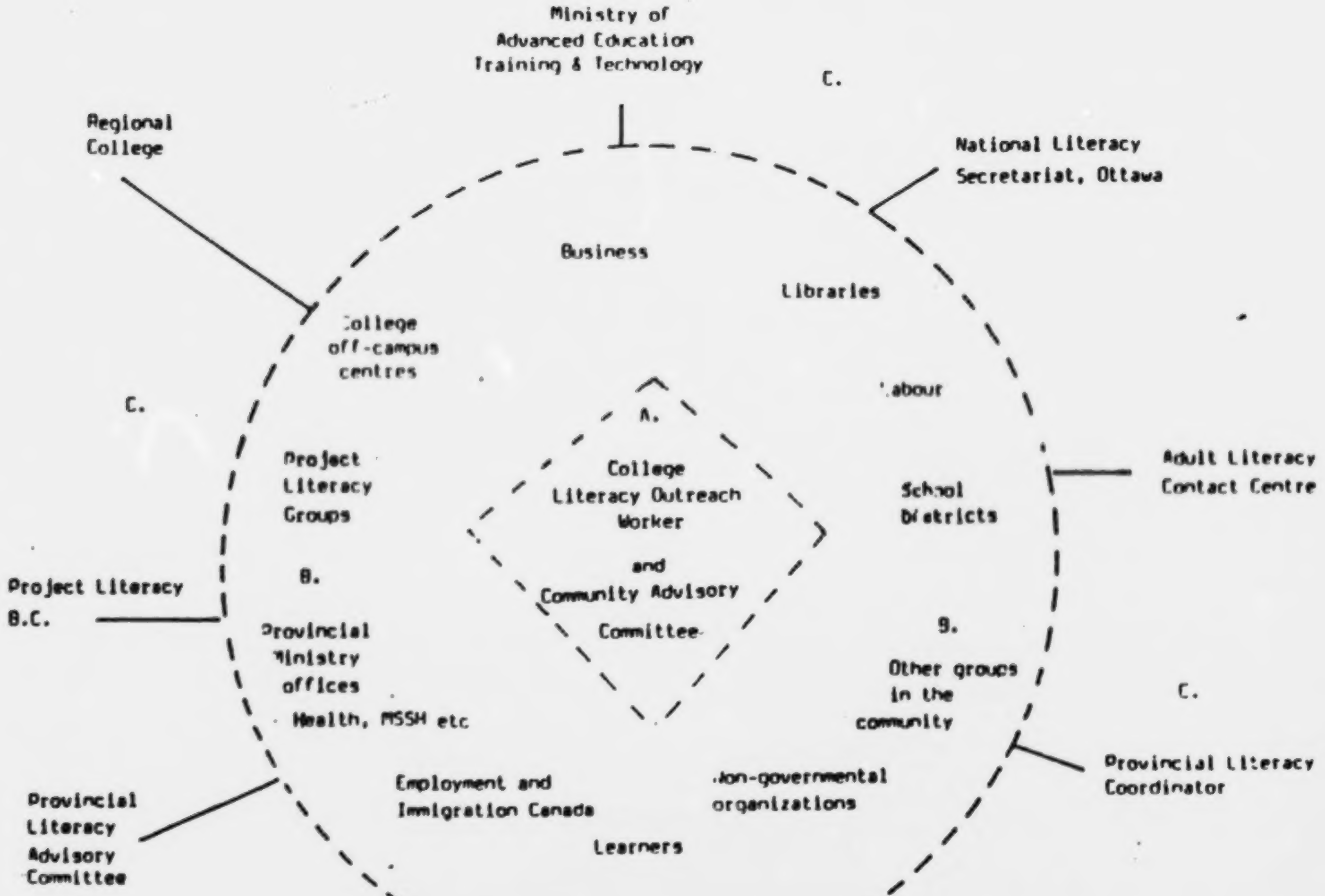
New Initiatives at the Local Level - The Need for Partnerships

The Committee urges a comprehensive provincial literacy strategy which will be rooted in and responsive to community needs. This could be called a community-based approach.[10] The term "community-based" has many meanings, but they all point to instructional and organizational arrangements that, in some sense are embedded in specific communities and take their lead from learners. Adult learners are seen as knowledgeable members of the community capable of participating in the learning process rather than empty vessels to be filled with knowledge. The emphasis is on the person and the growth of the individual working cooperatively with others in the group - staff, volunteers, other learners. A community-based strategy may be found operating within institutions at a classroom level where the instruction is "learner-centred". A community-based strategy may also be found at an organizational level where the literacy program itself either becomes an autonomous community organization, or has links to an existing community organization. The classroom strategy tends to go with the organizational strategy, but either may exist independently of the other.

The term "community-based literacy program" does require active community involvement in that program. It suggests partnerships and collaboration among community members and organizations. Different communities will have different needs which will affect literacy program offerings if they are to be learner-centred. Most programs already in place tend to appeal to those undereducated adults who are most highly motivated. To reach other adults who need literacy training, but who have not acknowledged the need, new initiatives are needed. The programs have to be taken to the people, or come from them. A pro-active approach is needed by the educational institutions.

The accompanying strategy model (page 28) indicates some of the various players who could contribute to the development of literacy initiatives at the local level. It also indicates potential resources - funding and expertise - to which the local community could have access.

As community organizations, the B.C. colleges are positioned to play the role of regional and local catalysts, to be the animators and facilitators for bringing about change and new


Ministry of
Advanced Education
Training & Technology
C.
Regional College
National Literacy Secretariat, Ottawa
Business
Libraries
College off-campus centres
C.
Labour
A.
College Literacy Outreach Worker
and
Community Advisory Committee
Project Literacy Groups
School Districts
Adult Literacy Contact Centre
Project Literacy B.C.
B.
B.
Provincial Ministry offices
Health, MSSH etc
Other groups in the community
C.
Provincial Literacy Coordinator
Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee
Employment and Immigration Canada
Non-governmental organizations
Learners

A COMMUNITY BASED STRATEGY MODEL

A. Catalyst and planner

B. The local partners

C. The resources

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initiatives backed up with their expertise and resources. Such initiatives, however, should be carried out sensitively and in cooperation with community partners such as school districts, business, labour, libraries, community agencies and non-profit organizations. Wherever possible, groups of learners should be involved in the process as well.

The Committee realizes that, in practice, the same approach to the provision of literacy opportunities will not be appropriate to all college regions. Some college regions cover huge areas of territory and have a sparsely distributed population. Other college regions cover a small geographic area but are very densely populated with distinctive community neighbourhoods. In some college regions, school districts may be the major deliverers of literacy programming. In others, the college may be the only delivery agent. In some regions, it may be possible to negotiate and plan initiatives with local employers or labour. In others, the initiatives may be in cooperation with local Project Literacy groups, Native bands or libraries. It will be up to each college to develop an action plan for its region in cooperation with the local community partners.

It is in the planning of a regional strategy that the unique needs of each college region can then be addressed. Perhaps several part-time outreach workers will be needed to service small isolated communities. Perhaps one or two full-time workers will be required to serve densely populated areas with great need. In well-served areas, perhaps the role of the outreach worker will be to concentrate on networking and the development of other program supports. The chart provided is not a centralized model, but a generic one which suggests the possible partnerships and available resources. The model is flexible and adaptable to the unique needs of each college region.

The Committee feels strongly that there must be responsibility and accountability for ensuring that there are strategies to serve all communities in the province. This includes geographic communities and sociological communities such as at workplace sites and among the disabled. These new initiatives should complement existing ones and build new partnerships so that potential learners may be served according to their needs. But the responsibility and the accountability most appropriately rests with the colleges to ensure that these strategies and partnerships emerge.

New money will be needed for this strategy to work. Funds will be required for the facilitating role of the college, that is, to provide, at a minimum, an outreach worker in each college region. Funds will be needed for development and support of such positions. Funds will also be needed for local initiatives. These initiatives will include needs assessment, community animation, program development, ongoing delivery and evaluation.

The Committee envisages a provincial fund to which any of the community partners could apply, provided that they are part of the regional plan. Thus, partnerships are critical at the local level, but may also extend beyond the local confines. Agencies other than MAETT - employers, labour, libraries, other ministries, service clubs, foundations - should be encouraged to become partners in the funding and delivery of local initiatives. For such things to happen, there have to be mechanisms for participation, accountability and administration. The Committee therefore recommends that:

9 • **MAETT mandate and fund all colleges to serve as the primary catalysts for the organization of community-based literacy services for adults in the communities of their regions.**

Each college should be responsible for selecting an outreach worker to work in cooperation with a community advisory committee to assess needs and cooperatively plan new literacy programs and initiatives in each college region.

10 • **As part of its regional literacy plan, each college ensure that it identifies the population in its region who are potential literacy students, and identifies measures to assure accessibility of programs for those potential students through some community agency.**

11 • **Provincial funds be available to community organizations and non-profit societies working in cooperation with the outreach worker of the college and the community advisory committee for the design and delivery of literacy programs appropriate to the needs of the particular groups they serve.**

The Need for Commitment

The implementation of this new strategy will require stable, predictable funding. Too much literacy programming has suffered from funding shortfalls and financial insecurity. Any strategy which hopes to involve the communities and partnerships has to have the assurance of sustained funding in order to maintain staff, to develop programs and maintain the level of service. Short-term project type funding is not good enough for this kind of program delivery. For the community-based strategy to work there needs to be financial commitment by MAETT, and there needs to be commitment from each college board and administration to implement the strategy in its region and especially in communities of greatest need.

There are other key elements that need to be considered in any new literacy thrust - improved program offerings, expanded services, attention to special issues and needs, research and evaluation, prevention of the problem at the source. A new provincial adult literacy policy will have to be developed and adopted as well. Each of these elements will be considered in turn.

4. NEW PROGRAMS, EXPANDED SERVICES

New Literacy Programs

To improve program offerings there must be a focus on the potential learners. Who benefits from existing programs? Who does not? It has already been indicated (Section 1) that there is a complex and heterogeneous population among undereducated adults. It would seem simple to acknowledge three broad categories - those who are not in the labour force, those who are in the workplace, and immigrants in need of English language training. However, within each of these categories are many others. The potential learners can range from undereducated youth to senior citizens. The life circumstances can vary from single parents on welfare to more mature women wanting to re-enter the labour force, or workers dislocated because of technological change. Mention also has been made of special groups such as Natives, offenders and ex-offenders, and people with specific disabilities. Conventional programming is not sufficient for many of these people. New forms of programming need to be developed and tested.

Adult Literacy Programs - A Range of Types

The key to effective adult literacy programming is to provide flexible programming arrangements in a variety of ways. The following list is by no means all-inclusive but rather is suggestive of the variety of good literacy arrangements which now exist in Canada.

Community-based programs:

- arise in response to local need;
- under the umbrella of a recognized community consortium;
- under the aegis of an existing non-profit organization whose main purpose may not be literacy training;
- may be a non-profit incorporated society with its own board;
- may operate completely independently of educational institutions;

- may operate in partnership with a variety of local educational institutions - college, school boards, etc.;
- usually small groups and one-to-one tutoring arrangements serving local neighbourhood in large cities, or the entire city if population total is small.

Workplace-based:

- classes delivered in cooperation with college, school board or community-based program personnel (unionized and non-unionized sites);
- classes delivered through existing company trainers (management approach);
- classes delivered through union instructors either from the same workplace and on-site or in off-site locations such as union halls;
- classes conducted during work-time, after work with no pay, after work with straight time pay, or shared time (one hour of company time, one hour of worker's own time);
- one-to-one peer tutoring.

College-based programs:

- Classes within the institution - full-time and part-time;
- Community outreach - small groups in a community setting such as a church hall, neighbourhood house, library, subsidized housing;
- Community outreach - one-to-one volunteer tutoring in the home or other mutually convenient location for learner and tutor.

School board-based programs:

- adult day schools - full-time and part-time;
- night classes;
- drop-in learning centres - open days and evenings;
- classes or small groups in community and specialized settings such as housing units, extended care homes, psychiatric facilities, etc.

Library-based Programs:

- classes, small groups and one-to-one tutoring delivered by library employed coordinators/instructors;
- locales used for delivery of local school board, college or community-based literacy programs.

Private Programs:

- funding usually comes through fee-for-service contractual arrangements with government and service agencies;
- not-for-profit programs started by individuals with commitment to adult education;
- for profit - eg. franchised learning operations.

Federally-funded employment-based type of programs:

- usually paid youth peer-tutoring programs.

Native Bands:

- programs run on reserves using classes, one-to-one, small groups, drop-in etc.

Correctional programs:

- usually contracted out to local educational institutions.

Unemployed action centres:

- small group or one-to-one tutoring, usually under community-based programs.

Distance education

- using resource capability of computers;
- using correspondence course type of arrangements but with the use of audio cassettes and an on-site tutor.

To reach the potential learners, there needs to be a variety of recruitment methods, a variety of learning situations in varied locations, with flexible scheduling and a variety of learning materials and teaching methods. These strategies all help to meet learners on their own terms.

The rest of Canada has learned from B.C. literacy initiatives. By the same token, B.C. can learn from initiatives elsewhere. As part of the work of the Committee, a research project to search out exemplary or lighthouse models of literacy programming and innovative practices was initiated. The list of selections is given in Appendix III.

Some Issues

Expanding B.C. literacy program initiatives through a community-based strategy raises some specific issues.

- Many of the existing community outreach programs use volunteer tutors. It is a reasonable assumption that many potential new ones will rely on volunteers as well. It is important to understand that good volunteer programs are not inexpensive. Effective volunteer tutoring programs require high quality recruitment, selection, training and supervision of volunteers. Learning materials, resources and facilities need to be provided. Some means of recognizing the volunteers' contributions is also desirable.

Currently, in B.C. many coordinators of volunteer literacy tutoring programs are stretched to the limits. Many are paid for only a few hours of work a week, but also put in many voluntary hours for the sake of the program. There seems to be some consensus in the field that between 25 to 40 matched pairs (of learners and tutors) is the range which can be managed by the equivalent of one full-time staff person, depending on local variables.

Coordinators of community-based tutoring programs within an institutional setting are usually professional educators. However, in community-based groups, coordinators need to be more like business managers, as they have overall responsibility for the development of program proposals, management of staff and funds. Such coordinators often have training needs. An investment in training and professional development can pay dividends in the future as a corps of experienced people can be drawn upon to act as trainers and resource support persons for new people entering the field.

Another issue related to the use of tutors deserves mention. In northern areas, and among Native people where job opportunities are scarce and there is little or no tradition of 'volunteering' as known in larger urban centres, tutors may have to be paid to deliver instructional service. Outreach programs should not exclude the possibility of paid tutors.

- Workplace programs are particularly under-represented in the present B.C. scene. There is currently a pilot program in place at the Royal Columbian Hospital. This program was developed as a partnership between Douglas College, the Hospital management and the Hospital Employees Union. It provides one useful model for others to follow.

In more remote workplaces, however, it may not be possible for an educational institution to enter into partnership with management and/or labour. The BEST program of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) provides a model of labour-run workplace programs. The unions advertise and run the programs. Workplace sites often have their own sub-cultures and union instructors are familiar with these. Another advantage is that the union knows the particular communication needs of the specific workplace.

Non-unionized workers and small business entrepreneurs may require literacy training, but would have to rely on community-based initiatives for training. These people are subject to the rules and regulations of the workplace imposed by society, but there may be no vehicles for skill upgrading. Confidential tutoring services might be offered to functionally illiterate business persons.

Yet another aspect of workplace literacy is the rapidly changing communication needs within some enterprises because of technological advances and innovations. Some of these needs might be met by management and union training programs. Others might be better met by contracting for the service with an educational institution.

Employers, large and small, must be made aware of the importance of workplace literacy. They should be encouraged to identify, in a non-threatening manner, those employees who require literacy skills upgrading and to cooperate with their unions (where applicable) and their local college in order to provide adequate assessment and appropriate literacy programs.

Educational institutions will need to be flexible in their approaches to workplace literacy. They should be prepared to deliver "skills upgrading" programs (a more acceptable term in the workplace than literacy training) on, or adjacent to, the worksite. Workplace programs should be arranged to suit plant and workers' schedules.

Including a computer component in an upgrading program often makes it more attractive to workers. A mobile computer lab is a viable concept for small or isolated communities. Sawmills, mines and manufacturing plants could be well served by such a unit.

The Committee recommends that:

12 • Where necessary, workplace literacy grants be available for employers or trade unions, or groups of employers or workers to design and deliver literacy programs. These grants should be available to colleges that design programs cooperatively with employers and/or trade unions. Those employers and trade unions with sufficient resources should be encouraged to aid in financing literacy programs.

• Using technology to support learning provides several possibilities for literacy training. Literacy initiatives could capitalize on existing and emerging technologies. As mentioned in Section 2, some jurisdictions have opted for widespread implementation of the PALS program - an interactive software program that encourages learners to read and 'write' by developing word-processing skills. IBM has aggressively marketed this program.

In Calgary, a pilot program using another computer system - Computer Curriculum Corporation (CCC) - is being run with Natives. There are 2,500 hours of software available with the CCC system. The system has remote capability. As many as 128 learning stations can be linked to the MICROHOST through the use of telephone data lines. A one-site network server can manage as many as 32 learning stations. CCC offers ESL in several languages as well as courses in language skills, mathematics and other program areas. It also has student management capability.

In Ottawa, the Learning Centre is a storefront ABE centre using computers as the primary means of instruction. It was made possible by a multiple partnership of government, school boards, university, the corporate and voluntary sectors. In the Centre there is a total of 20 computers which have been donated or lent by various computer corporations. The most popular computer with the students is the MacIntosh. With the use of shell disks, instructors can develop their own courseware.[11]

Some advantages of computers for adults with low educational attainment are:

- they provide a mode of learning not associated with previous school experiences;
- provision of individualized learning - students can learn at their own rate, can repeat lessons on demand and test comprehension immediately;
- flexibility of scheduling around job and family duties;
- acquisition of high-tech marketable skills such as word-processing and data entry while learning basic skills.

For the above reasons, computers are seen as highly motivational learning tools. A student's self-esteem grows once he/she learns to manipulate the machine and the academic progress can then accelerate. However, computers are not for everyone. Some programs have found that older learners are computer-shy. At the basic literacy level computers should be seen as only one instructional tool. Personal contact and group work are important in order to develop learners' social skills.

The use of technology is costly. Programs wishing to introduce computers need to analyze their needs and find the best system for the job required. Province-wide blanketing with one system is not recommended.

Pilot demonstration or experimental models using appropriate technologies should be encouraged. The proposed Native Open Learning Network (NOLN) is an interesting model. Teleconferencing, educational television, telephone-tutors and computer networks can all be explored and used to support literacy initiatives.

• Native literacy programs are grossly under-represented in the province. Many native people lead painful lifestyles - in poverty and with high rates of unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse and high drop-out rates from secondary school. There must be increased educational initiatives that are culturally-based for Natives. Bilingual/bicultural initiatives in some Native communities have been successful. Opportunities should be made available for more adult Native literacy activities, in line with the Access for All initiative.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

13 • **Immediate action be taken to establish policy and procedures for the delivery of Native literacy programs which recognize that effective programs depend on the maximum involvement of Native educators and leaders in the design and implementation of a province-wide strategy.**

14 • **MAETT recognize aboriginal languages and support programs in Native communities to develop Native language literacy where a written form of the language exists.**

15 • **The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology initiate discussions with the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Secretary of State of Canada to provide funding for literacy programs for Natives seeking training.**

• **English Language Training for Immigrants.** The 1986 Census shows the major non-official languages spoken in the home in British Columbia to be:

Chinese	69,845
Punjabi	26,970
German	14,885
Italian	11,155
Portuguese	5,820
Other languages	58,635

Literate, well-educated immigrants can usually learn English fairly quickly and go on to practise their trades and professions. There are many, however, who have come to Canada who are not so well-educated. There are others who are illiterate in their mother tongue. A wide range of students thus enters into ESL programs. Many show up in literacy programs.

From previous Census figures, it is known that about one-fifth to one-quarter of the target undereducated population are immigrants whose mother tongue is not English. The notes which accompany Appendix I indicate that immigration has increased significantly and is expected to continue increasing. Immigrants who are not functional in English face a triple disadvantage in Canada:

- they cannot converse easily to make their basic needs known;
- they cannot read or write English to comprehend print;
- they have to adjust to different cultural conditions.

There is a variety of English language classes offered in communities throughout the province. These range from full-time programs for immigrants destined for the labour force to part-time classes for immigrant women who are not labour force destined. However, citizens and refugee claimants are not eligible for these classes. In addition, there are waiting lists, especially for the full-time programs. When immigrants do not have access to existing ESL programs, they often end up in basic literacy classes.

Learning needs and instructional strategies for those requiring ESL training as a prerequisite to English literacy differ from those requiring English mother tongue literacy. In addition, for people who are illiterate in their own language, mother tongue literacy should be a prerequisite to literacy in the official language(s). Toronto has started a Multilingual Literacy Centre which is providing training and resources for specific linguistic groups in their mother tongue. Volunteers who speak Portuguese, Spanish, Urdu and Punjabi have been trained to work with illiterate immigrants in those languages. Mention has already been made of the bilingual/bicultural approach for Natives and recommendations made on Native literacy programming.

The Committee has other concerns regarding ESL. All of the Immigrant Service Societies surveyed indicated that they faced needs which they did not have the resources to meet. Many college ESL programs are also facing problems in servicing their clientele. Some of the identified needs include: elimination of wait lists for training; more full-time, year-round classes with sustained funding; more classes for specific groups of people such as mothers of pre-schoolers, refugees, and immigrants who are already citizens. Restrictive funding arrangements limit the ability of many ESL programs to respond to needs they encounter day by day.

More specifically at this time, there is much concern in the field over the termination of the Citizenship Instruction and Language Training (CILT) Agreement with the federal government in March 1990. This is by far the biggest ESL program, serving some 25,000 citizens and immigrants throughout the province in 1988 in part-time classes in colleges and school districts. This termination will leave a potential gap in programming. Other resources will be needed to provide the necessary programs and support services for ESL learners, including refugee claimants.

The Committee recommends that:

16 • **The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology initiate discussions with the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada to take the necessary steps to**
  a) eliminate wait lists and restrictive criteria for entry into English language training;
  b) expand the quantity and diversity of adult English language training for those in need; and
  c) give priority to provision of language training to newcomers shortly after arrival in Canada.

Expanded Support Services

Access Issues for Undereducated Adults

Illiteracy is a complex phenomenon and often only one problem of many faced by undereducated adults. For the majority, there are several barriers to be overcome before they can become learners. Some of these barriers are geographic, others are psychological, many are financial and some are imposed by the institutions and agencies that provide the literacy opportunities. The following items were identified as barriers to learning by callers to the Adult Literacy Contact Centre in March, 1989:[12]

- lack of volunteers for in-home tutoring;
- anxiety about attending classes;
- classes which are too large (ESL);
- classes which are full (ESL);
- inability to pay fees;
- inability to obtain financial assistance or to obtain clear information about eligibility for financial assistance and how to apply for it;
- uncaring and dismissive attitude by institutional staff;
- anxiety about testing procedures;

- inability to reach contact name.

A small class emphasizing one-to-one tutoring was identified by learners as a very positive aspect of available programs. Also positively identified were arrangements allowing learners to attend classes on a flexible basis convenient to their schedules and giving them the opportunity to begin immediately.

The new strategy for literacy programming and the development of diversified programming initiatives should help to make learning opportunities available on a more flexible basis.

Special attention will have to be paid to isolated and small communities. In rural areas, it takes more time to travel to attend classes or tutoring sessions. The extra cost of gas is an added expense for tutors, coordinators and learners who travel. Where there is no public transport it is sometimes difficult to get to class at night or during severe winter conditions. Some kind of mobile literacy van might be used to do a regular circuit of isolated communities. In smaller communities, the psychological barrier to actually seeking help may be more difficult to overcome, because people are more readily identified. This issue links back to the need for a public awareness campaign that will make it possible for anyone who needs help to come forward without embarrassment.

As much as possible should be done to remove the financial barriers to learning. Society should provide its members with the twelve years of schooling required to get by in life. In the case of undereducated adults, circumstances have interrupted that process of schooling. A free second chance at learning should be available to all adults who need it. Tuition fees have recently been eliminated for adults attending school district programs to the Grade 12 level. The colleges, however, are required to charge tuition fees for all levels of ABE. These conflicting policies by two different ministries are divisive and need to be made consistent. The same government policy should apply to all adult basic education programs. Equally, other financial barriers should be eliminated for those in need. These include costs of learning materials, transportation costs, and day care or child minding costs. The Committee therefore recommends that:

17 • All adults in British Columbia be enabled to pursue studies to the equivalent of Grade 12 without tuition fees.

18 • That MAETT work with educational institutions, community agencies and other government ministries to ensure that financial barriers which hinder access to literacy learning are eliminated.

Many literacy learners have been put in the position of having to lie about going to school if they receive UIC benefits: officially, if they attend school they risk losing these benefits. In this way, potential learners have been lost to programs and remain on social assistance. In other cases, learners have been seen as employable if they return to school and they are then channelled into jobs which may be short-term. Thus, attendance at skills upgrading programs has been interrupted and learners have become discouraged in their attempts to improve their educational levels. It appears that there have been local variations in the ways in which the UIC policy is implemented. There should be a standardized approach in use which would ensure the maintenance of UIC benefits for all adults seeking to upgrade their literacy skills.

The Committee is heartened by the statement in the Labour Force Development Strategy of EIC that says "the Government intends to provide UI benefits to those workers who must complete secondary school equivalency courses where necessary in order to take further training."[13] The Committee therefore recommends that:

19 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology:
1) approach the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada to

56

    a) initiate changes in policy so that undereducated adults are encouraged to be learners without loss or reduction of UIC payments, and
    b) request direct purchase of literacy level training; and,
2) request his counterparts in the other provinces to take action on the above issues.

Institutional bureaucratic barriers are best taken care of by personnel training. What may be required are some sensitization exercises within institutions, particularly at the key interface points with potential learners. One thinks of the colleges where able-bodied college personnel were confined to a wheelchair for a day to experience some of the difficulties faced by physically disabled people. An imaginative mind could think of some parallel stratagems for illiteracy sensitization.

Support Services

Learner assessment and counselling services need to be improved. Assessments need to be flexible in approach and done as quickly and as sensitively as possible when required so that learners do not become anxious and discouraged with long waiting periods. Assessments particularly need to be improved for people with special needs - the learning disabled, the hearing and visually impaired, and brain damaged learners. Well-trained assessment counsellors are extremely important in fulfilling these services.

Information and counselling services need to be expanded especially off main campus areas. The needs are for personal, educational and career counselling.

There are continuing in-service training and professional development needs for all literacy practitioners: coordinators, counsellors, instructors and tutors. Most people have acquired their training on the job. There is very little opportunity for these people to come together to share experiences and develop their skills except at the Annual ABEABC Conference. Some practitioners feel the need for short-term intensive workshops, especially in the areas of learning disabilities, counselling and participatory education methods. Much could be achieved by developing networks among literacy practitioners. Ontario and Alberta are developing regional networks for information-sharing, resource collections, and professional development. Some of the Ontario network centres also act as regional contact and referral centres for learners. Similar models could be developed in British Columbia as part of the community-based strategy.

The development of a resource base within each college region will require partnerships at the local and regional levels to coordinate effectively the available resources and to implement new initiatives. The public libraries in particular, could be useful partners in this activity. Public library and college literacy resources together with appropriate technologies could all be used to develop a cooperative and effective resource base to serve the communities in each college region.

British Columbia has been a leader in the development of ABE and literacy curriculum guides and learning materials. This practice should certainly be continued. There has been some improvement in the availability of suitable adult-oriented resources and materials in recent years, but there is always a need for new materials oriented to students' needs and interests as well as for the improvement of teaching and tutoring.

The Committee recommends that:

20 • Assessment procedures and counselling services in each college region be examined and, where required, be developed, improved and expanded to emphasize the needs of undereducated adults and especially those of learning disabled adults.

21 • Provincial funds be available for a variety of ongoing professional development activities and training events for literacy instructors, coordinators, tutors and learners in the province, especially in the area of learning disabilities.

22 • In each college region, literacy resource centres be established for the use of learners, tutors, and instructors within the regional network. Such centres might best be developed in cooperation with the public library system, building on their existing collections and other resources.

23 • MAETT continue its support for adult literacy resources that promote student-centred curriculum, materials development, teaching methods and evaluation, including distance education formats.

24 • Funds continue to be set aside for purposes of funding innovative demonstration projects and the other projects to be cost-shared with the Department of Secretary of State of Canada through the National Literacy Secretariat.

5. SPECIAL CONCERNS

Minority Groups

The thrust of this report and the Committee's deliberations have been focussed on adult literacy issues for the general undereducated population. However, there are minority groups which should receive particular consideration because of special issues associated with them. These groups include Francophones, youth, the incarcerated, parolees and ex-offenders, and people with disabilities.

Francophone Literacy

There are 10,525 people in British Columbia whose home language is French. There are 1,335 people who speak only French. There is much useful instructional material and documentation available from Francophone groups in Ontario and Quebec which should help in the establishment of any French literacy programs in the province.

Youth and Adult Literacy Programs

There is a concern that teenagers who have dropped out of school show up in literacy programs designed for more adult citizens. Youth can change the atmosphere of such classes and interfere with the adults' 'second chance' at learning. Literacy programs should not become a holding tank for young people who should be served by the alternate education programs of the regular school system. Programs especially designed for re-entry youth should be provided.

Provincial Corrections

It is generally reported that high rates of illiteracy exist in inmate populations. However, there is no policy for the promotion of literacy in the provincial corrections system. Where programs exist they have usually been established on an institution by institution basis under contracts with community colleges. Also, there is no consistent policy or practice regarding the provision of post-release educational opportunities. Literacy programs for those in need can help integrate ex-offenders into society more quickly and thereby help decrease recidivism. The Committee therefore recommends that:

25 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the B.C. Solicitor-General cooperatively plan and deliver literacy and upgrading programs within all correctional institutions and half-way houses in the province.

People With Special Needs

People with special needs should be integrated into regular programs. It is essential that appropriate support services be in place for such integration. Some examples of support services are: notetakers, special study groups, xerox passes, necessary audio-visual equipment. Some adults with special needs should be more fully supported and may not be able to be integrated into regular programs.

The Committee recommends that:

26 • The Ministries of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; Education; Health; and Social Services and Housing, cooperate to ensure that the unique learning needs of disabled people who wish to improve their literacy skills and employment potential are addressed.

Research and Evaluation

The Need for Research

The adult literacy field is still a relatively new one. As the field expands, questions will arise to which answers must be sought. Any new initiatives in strategy then should allow for a research capability. The kinds of research which may be required include:

- developing a better statistical base for planning and evaluating literacy programs;
- searching for the reasons for non-participation in literacy programs;
- longitudinal follow-up studies of learners;
- explanation of attrition rates.

Evaluation

Generally speaking, the adult literacy field has been left to evaluate itself. Evaluation practices differ within institutions and within programs. In one-to-one tutoring programs, volunteer tutor coordinators usually ask for feedback on the tutor-training workshop, but have not generally looked at the program as a whole. A new volunteer tutor program evaluation kit has been developed which should be useful for programs to undertake this vital process, and to improve practice.

New methods of assessing learners' progress need to be thought about and developed. Learners should be encouraged to participate in assessment and evaluation procedures.

If new literacy initiatives are to take place in the province then it will be important to set up a tracking system and evaluation procedures to determine how well the overall literacy strategy is working.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

27 • **MAETT support an adult literacy research and evaluation capability in the province and establish necessary procedures for evaluating the success of the literacy initiatives.**

28 • **Where feasible, federal-provincial cooperation and interprovincial cooperation in research, evaluation and materials development projects be encouraged.**

Interministerial Collaboration

While the Committee has recommended that the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology become the lead ministry for adult literacy, it realizes that the issue of adult illiteracy is a pervasive one which cuts across other ministries. Ministries with specific roles which impinge on adult literacy programs and issues are: Education, Health, Labour, Social Services and Housing, Attorney-General, Solicitor-General, Municipal Affairs, and Finance. Closer partnerships with these ministries should be encouraged, for the sake of potential learners who are often confused and frustrated as they feel shuffled between a variety of bureaucracies.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

29 • MAETT sponsor an Inter-Ministerial Task Force of relevant provincial ministries to ensure that their policies collectively support adults who wish to improve their literacy skills.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health provides some support for the education of physically handicapped people. There is an interest in producing public health information in plain English. As a general rule, people with the poorest health tend to be from the lowest socio-economic ranks of society and have low educational levels, hence the concern that the information be readily accessible to them. Such information and materials could be used in adult literacy programs. The Ministry of Health should also become a partner at the community level. There are 17 health units around the province which could also provide possible meeting space for literacy groups.

The Ministry of Social Services and Housing

The Ministry of Social Services and Housing provides assistance to some literacy students within the context of the Ministry's own major service delivery areas - income assistance, employment and training programs, child protection and support for the mentally handicapped.

Under the Opportunities for Independence program, approximately 13,000 income assistance recipients receive supplementary support to cover the expenses (eg., tuition, books and transportation) of attending an educational or job training program that will enhance their employability and assist them to get off income assistance. The Ministry has just published a manual for this program in plain English.

Thus, this Ministry's policy is one of "employability", not literacy acquisition per se. Adults with ten or twelve years of schooling who seek vocational training are more likely to find employment than are literacy students. From the potential literacy learner's perspective, however, the emphasis on employability is perceived as a barrier to improving one's educational level. Instructors and counsellors have indicated that there is considerable variation from region to region in obtaining access to MSSH support. There appears therefore to be a need for a more standardized "literacy" approach or policy.

Until very recently, learners and instructors also noted the absence of counselling and referral help in relation to educational planning. The Committee is pleased to learn that, in May 1989, the Ministry implemented a computerized Assessment and Referral System to identify clients' employment and training needs and to make appropriate referrals. The system includes information about the client's educational level and the need for "Reading and Writing Skills Training Programs". This Assessment and Referral System is operated by the Ministry's Rehabilitation Officers through the Ministry's network of local district offices.

This Ministry also provides some funding to community groups under Community Projects Funding. This funding does not

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specifically provide for literacy programming, but may include some support, to the extent that literacy activities fall within the overall purpose of the recipient group. For example, a contract with a multicultural organization may contribute to an ESL literacy program sponsored by that organization.

In other areas of this Ministry's mandate, such as services to families and children, literacy may be identified as a need and clients may be referred to appropriate educational institutions. Ministry service to the mentally handicapped includes training in communications skills which may include literacy.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture

The Library Services Branch of this Ministry should be encouraged to provide funding and leadership to public libraries in the province to become more involved in literacy work. Literacy and libraries are natural allies. Most communities have public libraries. Local librarians can help in identifying suitable reading material for adults and in bringing together literacy resources, collections and kits. They can help in information brokering roles and, where space is adequate, offer that for tutoring sessions and/or meetings. Libraries are not as threatening as schools and colleges for some adults. Libraries then, are vital partners at the community level and would be invaluable in developing and strengthening regional literacy resource centres.

Ministry of Labour

The recently introduced Workplace Hazardous Materials Information system (WHMIS) legislation focusses on worker education in the interests of safety in the workplace. Such requirements may lead to the discovery of literacy needs in the workplace. Health and safety programs as they relate to the workplace can be severely handicapped if employees cannot read or fully comprehend written material issued by the Workers' Compensation Board, the union, or the employer.

Ministry of Education

Of all the ministerial partners, the Ministry of Education is key on two accounts. It is involved in remediation and prevention - the twin thrusts of any literacy endeavour. As many school districts offer adult basic literacy programs, they share many of the concerns and issues of their college and community counterparts. Yet there is no personnel with responsibility for adult literacy program support within the Ministry. This lack of support is keenly felt by those in the field.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

30 • The Ministry of Education be encouraged to recognize explicitly its role in the provision of adult literacy programs and to provide staff with expertise in the principles and practices of adult education for this program area. Such person(s) should work cooperatively with MAETT counterpart(s).

31 • MAETT work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that MAETT's resources and training activities to promote student-centred curriculum, learning materials, teaching methods and evaluation are also available to literacy instructors and tutors working in school district adult programs.

The issue of prevention involves the entire school system of the province and is too great to be handled by this Committee. The Committee acknowledges and supports the current initiatives underway in the Ministry of Education to overhaul the British Columbia school system. However, the Committee does have some concerns which overlap with its interest in adult literacy. There are at least two groups of young people who tend to become illiterate adults - those who 'drop-out' from the public school system, and those who are socially promoted and even graduate with a Grade 12 certificate without being able to read and write. These people tend to show up in adult programs. The school system is uniquely qualified to address the potential illiteracy cycle. Screening and monitoring devices need to be put in place to identify students who are falling behind and to give them the extra help and support they need before it becomes too late. Better remedial treatment is needed in schools and better accommodation of children with special learning needs is required, especially at the secondary level.

There needs to be far more public awareness and discussion within the public school system, parents' groups and communities of the issues related to adult literacy. A recent thrust in the adult literacy field is that of family or intergenerational literacy where parents of pre-schoolers and young children participate in literacy programs and learn to read and spend time during the program reading to or with their children. These programs, mainly in the pilot stage across the country, are attempts to break the cycle of illiteracy from one generation to the next.

The provision of opportunities for adults to become more literate is a societal responsibility, but we need to take measures to stem the tide of young illiterates. Otherwise, adult illiteracy will always be with us.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

32 • **MAETT and the Ministry of Education work cooperatively to encourage and co-sponsor intergenerational literacy initiatives in British Columbia.**

Plain Language

The recent report of the Justice Reform Committee[14] raises issues with a strong relationship to adult literacy. The emphasis is not on the literacy skills of people who must read documents from the legal system, but on the literacy practices of those who write these documents. The Committee notes,

> People involved in litigation need to understand the documents that affect them, and especially those documents that they must sign or swear. They should be able to understand the words that are spoken to them in court, by lawyers and judges. And the laws that govern people's lives should be intelligible to them. The justice system of this Province must commit itself to speaking in plain language.

The report recommends that a "Plain Language Committee" be established to develop a strategy for implementing plain language in legislation and legal documents.

The issue of plain language affects all ministries in their roles of information-gatherers and disseminators. The efforts of MSSH and the interest of the Ministry of Health in this issue have already been noted. The Committee considers that striking a working interministerial committee on plain language could be a Cabinet initiative and a first step towards acknowledging shared responsibility for literacy issues.

The Committee recommends that:

33 • **MAETT encourage and support plain English efforts throughout the British Columbia government, in all those Ministries and departments that deal with the general public, including those with the least education. The Ministries include: the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology itself; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Labour; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Social Services and Housing; the Attorney General; the Solicitor-General; and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Workers' Compensation Board and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia should also be included.**

Ongoing Monitoring of Literacy

The original terms of reference for the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee state that the Committee will operate to the end of 1990. The present Committee will have largely fulfilled the original terms of reference by the end of 1989. The future of the Committee is not then assured. However, the Committee has recommended a multi-year strategy and wishes to emphasize again the necessity for a long-term commitment to adult literacy programming. The job cannot be done on an ad hoc basis.

The Committee has recommended a new strategy and raised many issues which need attention immediately and in the long-term if the strategy is to succeed. The current staffing in the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology is inadequate for the proper leadership, coordination and monitoring of all the initiatives proposed. There needs also to be an ongoing literacy advisory body and decision-making mechanism which will reflect the partnership and community orientations of the new strategy.

The Committee therefore recommends that:

34 • There be an ongoing Provincial Literacy Advisory Council to address literacy issues, to oversee the awarding of grants, to monitor and report regularly on the progress of the literacy strategy.
The membership of this Council should be drawn from literacy practitioners and learners, community organizations and other partners in the literacy strategy.
For 1990, in order to provide continuity between the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee and the new Council, there should be a mix of new appointees and some former members from the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee.

6. THE NEED FOR A LITERACY POLICY

In the early 1980s, British Columbia was in the lead in Canada in the development of a policy which included literacy and ESL. That policy was developed before the formation of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and was under the rubric of the Ministry of Education. Many changes have taken place since the adoption of the policy in 1982 and now, with a "new" Ministry (MAETT) and a new literacy strategy being recommended, the time is right for a specific adult literacy policy.

This section examines briefly some of the issues around policy and then presents a draft policy for further consideration.

What is "Policy"?[15]

The term "policy" is commonly used but often ill-defined.

The term is often used to identify a specific document, often with a title including the word "policy". Such a document may refer to: government principles and goals (perhaps a brief, general statement that the government will work to provide opportunities for adult basic education); statements of how the government hopes others will behave; and government operating procedures.

The term is also used in a de facto sense to suggest the tacit arrangements and assumptions upon which decisions may be based or carried out, and thus the ways in which certain actions are promoted in practice by institutional structures and routines. Every explicit policy statement presupposes a set of arrangements through which institutions operate and make decisions. These are essential to a policy's implementation in practice. Central in these arrangements, linking the most general policies with actual programming, are the formulae through which funding is provided to institutions and organizations, and the formats for reporting on activity by those institutions and organizations. These institutional arrangements, which may not appear in any policy document, may be called guidelines, procedures or formulae.

Existing British Columbia Policy

The existing (1982) policy document in British Columbia is formulated broadly.[16] It recognizes the responsibility of the Ministry of Education "to foster learning opportunities for adults in British Columbia who have not had the opportunity to develop some or all of those skills required to function successfully in Canadian society." The Ministry policy is "to provide, to adult citizens and landed immigrants residing in the province, reasonable access to high quality adult basic education programs." (Adult basic education includes basic literacy, academic upgrading, pre-vocational training, and English language training).

The existing policy also states that the Ministry will assist education institutions by co-ordinating programs, developing resources, encouraging and supporting innovative programs, facilitating program evaluation and needs assessment with necessary data, and coordinating GED provision. Subject to funding, it will provide for programs, support services and professional development, and provide financial assistance to students who require it. The Ministry will also co-operate with other federal and provincial agencies in developing income support and child care; and will encourage co-operation among agencies with a role in ABE.

This policy came into being before the separation of the Post-Secondary Department from the Ministry of Education and the formation of the current Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. It thus identifies the colleges, institutes and public schools as program deliverers. As has been noted, the major deliverers of literacy programming in the province have been the colleges and school districts. Each of these now falls within a different ministerial jurisdiction.

Arrangements for school district adult programming under the Ministry of Education are specified in a memorandum of January, 1989, jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. This specifies that school districts will receive funding, for adult programs "leading to secondary school graduation", through the Ministry of Education's Fiscal Framework. In practice, this does not appear to exclude literacy programs. The underlying idea appears to be not that school districts are providers of adult programs, but that there is no age restriction on access to school district programs. The memorandum also clarifies that school districts and colleges are expected to cooperate in identifying and serving local needs.

The material in Appendix II makes it clear that except in one or two instances, school districts outside of the Capital Region and the Lower Mainland generally do not offer ABE programs. All colleges, however, offer ABE and thus they are the primary vehicles province-wide for this kind of programming.

Currently, there is no clear assignment of responsibility for issues of adult literacy programming, curriculum and assessment within the Ministry of Education. In the absence of leadership from the Ministry of Education, school district promotion of adult literacy programs depends largely on distinctive community and school district traditions of adult education. On the other hand, within the college system much useful work on curriculum development and particularly on province-wide ABE program articulation has been accomplished over the last few years. MAETT now offers a Provincial Diploma for successful completion of the highest level in ABE. Developments such as this point to a need for policy review and revision.

It is because of the combination of these various circumstances that the Committee made its first recommendation. MAETT, as the Ministry responsible for post-secondary and adult education, has to be the lead Ministry for adult literacy. The need for a new policy for MAETT should also now be apparent.

Some Guiding Principles for a Literacy Policy

The existing policy document has many weaknesses in the light of literacy programming experience. Part of the problem is that it is not literacy specific and therefore does not address some of the unique issues of literacy provision.

A number of common understandings developed in literacy programming and in the literature should provide guidance to both policy and institutional arrangements.

- Literacy programming necessarily involves community action. It also requires government support.
- Partnerships among the many communities, organizations and institutions interested in literacy are essential. Partnerships between business and labour are key. Many government departments and agencies, and many community organizations, have roles to play; and these need coordination. Public participation in educational planning and decision-making makes sense for both practical and democratic reasons.
- Promoting literacy cannot be a process of "eradicating" illiteracy in a few years. There is no reason to suppose that all youth leaving school will achieve reasonable literacy competencies; and not all adults with low literacy skills are attracted to study at any one time -

even when study is available. Consequently, the need is not for a short-term campaign but for an extended strategy.

- Public awareness and the development of programming need to work hand-in-hand.
- Secure program financing is necessary, so that students involved in or considering programs do not find their progress stymied, and so that a body of experienced literacy practitioners can be developed.
- Effective programming will focus not on skills independently or for their own sake, but skills linked to students' expressed needs for general education, parenting, training and employment and democratic citizenship.
- Groups with the least developed literacy (eg. the poorest, some immigrant groups, Natives) are not generally well served by conventional educational initiatives, and must be served in flexible and innovative approaches, often called "community-based". Such an approach may also serve literacy students generally.
- Volunteers have roles to play - in tutoring, in classroom assistance, in advocacy, in program support - but they are not the whole answer and they should not be mistaken for a "cheap and easy" solution.

The implementation of a community-based literacy strategy compels a reshaping of existing policy and the development of a specific adult literacy policy statement. A sample draft statement has been attached and is offered here for government consideration.

TOWARD AN ADULT LITERACY POLICY FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

POLICY

It is the policy of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology to increase the number of adult literacy learners each year to 1995. Priority in literacy opportunities throughout this period will be given to those adults assessed as having the least developed literacy skills.

The effectiveness of this policy and its implementation strategy will be formally reviewed in 1995 and revised as appropriate.

DIRECTION

Government will lead a partnership of business, labour, communities, and educational institutions to ensure access to literacy education for all adults in British Columbia, as part of the more general policy of expanding access to education and training for adults.

The objective of this initiative is to provide to all adults throughout the province opportunities to develop their own capabilities, to contribute to the economic and social development of society, and to participate effectively in the processes of citizenship.

This initiative is rooted in the recognition that people can and should continue to learn throughout their lives, and that adult learners should be encouraged to define their own learning objectives and pace of learning.

LEADERSHIP

The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology is responsible for exercising the leadership on behalf of government.

In the exercise of this responsibility, the Minister will:

a. declare adult literacy as a Ministry priority for the period 1990 to 1995;

b. sustain a program to enhance public and learner awareness of adult literacy issues and programs;

c. fund adult literacy programs and support services throughout the province;

d. facilitate needs assessment, curriculum development, professional development, materials development, program evaluation, and research;

e. secure financial assistance for adult literacy learners so as to eliminate financial barriers to adult literacy education;

f. co-ordinate the initiatives of other ministries of government - including Education, Health, Social Services and Housing, Attorney General, Solicitor General, Municipal Affairs - as they relate to adult literacy;

g. ensure public and learner participation in the planning processes relating to adult literacy.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this policy will be a shared responsibility of government, business, labour, libraries, communities and educational institutions through a community-based implementation strategy.

This strategy will:

a. encourage the development of a plan for adult literacy programming in each community of the province;

b. enable each college to provide adult literacy programming throughout its region, on campus, and in outreach settings as appropriate through the regular funding mechanisms for colleges;

c. require each college, through a literacy outreach worker in cooperation with a community-based advisory committee to develop active partnerships of business, labour, libraries, community organizations, school districts, and other agencies for the coordinated planning and provision of adult literacy opportunities in the communities of each college region;

d. enable government to provide funding for adult literacy initiatives undertaken by business, labour, libraries, community organizations and school districts in partnership with each other and the local college as part of the community-based adult literacy plan;

e. encourage appropriate roles for community volunteers;

f. provide financial incentives for employers and unions who sponsor programs for workers.

7. THE COSTS

Costs of Implementation

The costs to government of implementing the strategy presented in this report are substantial. They are presented in summary form on the following page in categories or "strands" related to the various components of the strategy.

It is the view of the Committee that achieving higher levels of adult literacy is not merely an educational issue - it is a major economic issue for the province, a social issue for our entire population, and a personal issue for a high percentage of that population. Indeed, it is the view of the Committee that adult literacy is a public policy issue of the highest order for British Columbia.

Accordingly, the cost estimates presented here reflect the seriousness with which the Committee believes the issues in adult literacy should be attacked in the next five years.

Costs of Inaction

Illiteracy is very costly to the undereducated and to British Columbia. Studies show that undereducated adults are poorer than better educated adults, that their unemployment rates are higher than the average and that a disproportionately large number are just not able to participate in the work force.

In December 1988, for example, the labour force participation rate for those British Columbians 15 years and over with 0 to 8 years of schooling was 35 percent, compared with an overall provincial participation rate of 64.4 percent. The unemployment rate for the same group was 15.9 percent compared with a provincial average of 10.4 percent.

Undereducated adults also receive low incomes. In 1987, for example, the average income of someone with less than eight years

COST ESTIMATES FOR ADULT LITERACY STRATEGY IN B.C. 1990-95

STRAND	STRAND DETAIL	RECOMMENDATION REFERENCE	PRESENT 89/90 INVESTMENT	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95
Coordination	Provincial	3	70,000	140,000	170,000	187,000	200,000	200,000
	Regional	9,10	N/A	900,000	990,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
	Prov. Committee	34	30,000	15,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Programs (Delivery)	Community	11		2,250,000	2,475,000	2,700,000	2,925,000	3,150,000
	Colleges	8	4,500,000	5,400,000	5,940,000	6,534,000	7,187,000	7,900,000
	Workplace	12	Through Training Investment Program					
Development	Cost-Shared Projects (Awareness Work)	4,5,24,32	500,000 (200,000)	700,000 (250,000)	800,000 (200,000)	800,000 (200,000)	700,000 (150,000)	700,000 (150,000)
Support	ABESAP	18	1,000,000	1,500,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
	Tuition Revenue Replacement	17		1,000,000 (one time only)				
	Professional Development	21	*	50,000**	100,000	150,000	150,000	200,000
	Materials & Curr. Development	23	100,000**	100,000	200,000	250,000	300,000	300,000
	Assessment & Counselling Resource centres (120,000 x 15)	20,22		***	1,800,000	1,980,000	2,000,000	2,200,000
	Evaluation and Research	27	50,000**	50,000**	40,000	40,000	30,000	30,000
Specific Group Development	Natives	13,14	Under the Native Task Force					
	E.S.L.		Under the E.S.L. Initiatives					
	Disabled (incentive grants)	26	Under seperate division		250,000	250,000	250,000	300,000
	Provincial Corrections (incentive grants)	25			250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000

* College specific and some cost-shared.

** Included in cost-shared above.

*** Model development under cost-shared above.

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of schooling was $14,474, compared with an average income of $17,435 for someone with some high school education and an average income of $34,189 for someone with a university degree.[17] When times are tough, those undereducated who do work are often the first to lose their jobs. Undereducated people who are fortunate enough to retain their jobs often cannot accept promotions because of their literacy problems. Some become anxious and quit rather than being found out.

Forecasts point to more serious problems in the future. We are living in a rapidly changing technological world which is presenting new challenges in the workplace and to society at large. The Workforce 2000 study states that "Of all the new jobs that will be created over the 1984-2000 period, more than half will require some education beyond high school, and almost a third will be filled by college graduates."[18] More jobs in the future will require higher skill levels in reading, reasoning and mathematics. Those who have difficulties in these areas are more likely than ever to be long-term unemployed.

Costs of training/retraining have to be balanced against the costs of maintaining people on government assistance for long periods of time. Trained, employable people can pump money back into the economy through income and sales taxes. Some of the costs of Canada's illiteracy bill as documented by the Southam articles are:

- unnecessary UIC payments,
- extra medical and worker compensation charges,
- inflated consumer prices to cover mistakes,
- dwindling revenues for publishers and newspapers,
- lost taxes,
- lost tuition fees,
- reduced international competitiveness.[19]

The costs are human too. Loss of self-esteem and loss of livelihood are twin threats for workers unable to accept promotions because of literacy problems. Those who are unable to find jobs also face misery. Then there are all the emotional strains and stresses for people who try to hide their difficulties from their families. Senator Joyce Fairbairn summarizes these costs this way: "The internal emotional loss for individuals, the stress, the wreck it makes of their lives - and particularly the lives of their children - is really a cost that I don't think any country can afford."[20] The losses in human dignity are incalculable. The losses often carry over into the next generation as well, as illiterate parents are not able to help and encourage their children with their schooling and literacy activities. Thus, a vicious cycle of intergenerational illiteracy may be maintained.

Attempts have been made to calculate the financial impact of illiteracy by the Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy. They estimated the direct cost to business of illiteracy in Canada to be in the order of $4 billion or more annually, and the cost to Canadian society as a whole to be around $10 billion. The researchers claim that their figures are fair estimates and stress that illiteracy is only one symptom of a complex social or personal problem that will require a complex response.[21]

There is no quick or simple solution to the problem of adult illiteracy. Effective programs are costly in the short-term for many reasons. Creative awareness strategies have to be used to attract a target group that cannot respond to print. Physical, psychological, social and financial barriers to participation have to be overcome. Low learner-instructor ratios are required in basic literacy work. Volunteer programs have to be professionally and financially supported if they are to be effective. Use of new technology to provide individualized instruction is expensive. The costs involved for a pro-active

82

approach to the problem have to be balanced against the costs of inaction.

The cost of tackling adult illiteracy in British Columbia is substantial, but the cost of doing less will be greater still in economic, social and personal terms. The alternative of more self-reliant, contributing, productive citizens, is surely preferable.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology acknowledge responsibility for, exercise a leadership role, and coordinate efforts in the development and provision of literacy programs and support services in the province.

2 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology declare adult literacy an area for immediate action and a priority program concern for the next five years.

3 • There be a literacy staff within the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) to offer leadership and coordination of literacy-related activities in the province. A start in this direction would be to convert the current interim position of full-time provincial literacy coordinator into a continuing one.

4 • MAETT allocate funds annually for each of the five priority years to promote public awareness of the issues related to undereducated adults.

5 • An information and referral centre be sustained as a primary provincial vehicle for encouraging potential learner contact and referral as well as for providing information to the public at large.

6 • Further recognition be given to the need to provide lower instructor-student ratios in literacy programs in colleges.

7 • Colleges make literacy a priority program area and seek to bring into line as quickly as possible resources dedicated to literacy instruction consistent with the illiteracy percentages in the college region.

8 • MAETT make provision for significant increases in the capacity of the post-secondary system to deliver literacy instruction in 1990-91, and for further significant increases in subsequent years.

9 • MAETT mandate and fund all colleges to serve as the primary catalysts for the organization of community-based literacy services for adults in the communities of their regions.

Each college should be responsible for selecting an outreach worker to work in cooperation with a community advisory committee to assess needs and cooperatively plan new literacy programs and initiatives in each college region.

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10 • As part of its regional literacy plan, each college ensure that it identifies the population in its region who are potential literacy students, and identifies measures to assure accessibility of programs for those potential students through some community agency.

11 • Provincial funds be available to community organizations and non-profit societies working in cooperation with the outreach worker of the college and the community advisory committee for the design and delivery of literacy programs appropriate to the needs of the particular groups they serve.

12 • Where necessary, workplace literacy grants be available for employers or trade unions, or groups of employers or workers to design and deliver literacy programs. These grants should be available to colleges that design programs cooperatively with employers and/or trade unions. Those employers and trade unions with sufficient resources should be encouraged to aid in financing literacy programs.

13 • Immediate action be taken to establish policy and procedures for the delivery of Native literacy programs which recognize that effective programs depend on the maximum involvement of Native educators and leaders in the design and implementation of a province-wide strategy.

14 • MAETT recognize aboriginal languages and support programs in Native communities to develop Native language literacy where a written form of the language exists.

15 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology initiate discussions with the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada and the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Secretary of State of Canada to provide funding for literacy programs for Natives seeking training.

16 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology initiate discussions with the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada to take the necessary steps to

a) eliminate wait lists and restrictive criteria for entry into English language training;

b) expand the quantity and diversity of adult English language training for those in need; and

c) give priority to provision of language training to newcomers shortly after arrival in Canada.

17 • All adults in British Columbia be enabled to pursue studies to the equivalent of Grade 12 without tuition fees.

18 • That MAETT work with educational institutions, community agencies and other government ministries to ensure that financial barriers which hinder access to learning are eliminated.

19 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology:
  1) approach the Minister of Employment and Immigration Canada to
    a) initiate changes in policy so that undereducated adults are encouraged to be learners without loss or reduction of UIC payments, and
    b) request direct purchase of literacy level training; and,
  2) request his counterparts in the other provinces to take action on the above issues.

20 • Assessment procedures and counselling services in each college region be examined and, where required, be developed, improved and expanded to emphasize the needs of undereducated adults and especially those of learning disabled adults.

21 • Provincial funds be available for a variety of ongoing professional development activities and training events for literacy instructors, coordinators, tutors and learners in the province, especially in the area of learning disabilities.

22 • In each college region, literacy resource centres be established for the use of learners, tutors, and instructors within the regional network. Such centres might best be developed in cooperation with the public library system, building on their existing collections and other resources.

23 • MAETT continue its support for adult literacy resources that promote student-centred curriculum, materials development, teaching methods and evaluation, including distance education formats.

24 • Funds continue to be set aside for purposes of funding innovative demonstration projects and the other projects to be cost-shared with the Department of Secretary of State of Canada through the National Literacy Secretariat.

25 • The Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the B.C. Solicitor-General cooperatively plan and deliver literacy and upgrading programs within all correctional institutions and half-way houses in the province.

26 The Ministries of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; Education; Health; and Social Services and Housing cooperate to ensure that the unique learning needs of disabled people who wish to improve their literacy skills and employment potential are addressed.

27 • MAETT support an adult literacy research and evaluation capability in the province and establish necessary procedures for evaluating the success of the literacy initiatives.

28 • Where feasible, federal-provincial cooperation and interprovincial cooperation in research, evaluation and materials development projects be encouraged.

29 • MAETT sponsor an Inter-Ministerial Task Force of relevant provincial ministries to ensure that their policies collectively support adults who wish to improve their literacy skills.

30 • The Ministry of Education be encouraged to recognize explicitly its role in the provision of adult literacy programs and to provide staff with expertise in the principles and practices of adult education for this program area. Such person(s) should work cooperatively with MAETT counterpart(s).

31 • MAETT work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that MAETT's resources and training activities to promote student-centred curriculum, learning materials, teaching methods and evaluation are also available to literacy instructors and tutors working in school district adult programs.

32 • MAETT and the Ministry of Education work cooperatively to encourage and co-sponsor intergenerational literacy initiatives in British Columbia.

33 • MAETT encourage and support plain English efforts throughout the British Columbia government, in all those Ministries and departments that deal with the general public, including those with the least education. The Ministries include: the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology itself; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Labour;

the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Social Services and Housing; the Attorney General; the Solicitor-General; and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Workers' Compensation Board and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia should also be included.

34 • There be an ongoing Provincial Literacy Advisory Council to address literacy issues, to oversee the awarding of grants, to monitor and report regularly on the progress of the literacy strategy.
The membership of this Council should be drawn from literacy practitioners and learners, community organizations and other partners in the literacy strategy.
For 1990, in order to provide continuity between the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee and the new Council, there should be a mix of new appointees and some former members from the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee.

EPILOGUE

This poem was composed by illiterate people in India. While some of the issues are specific to that country its message is of universal appeal and its use was endorsed by all the participants at the International Literacy Seminar - Literacy in the Industrialized Countries, held in Toronto, October 1987. Its message should be heeded.

WHY SHOULD WE BECOME LITERATE?

What kind of people are we?
We are poor, very poor -
but we are not stupid.
That is why, despite our illiteracy, we
still exist.
But we have to know
why we should become literate.

We joined the literacy classes before
But after some time, we got wise.
We felt cheated - so we left the classes.

Do you know what we found out?
The Babus' take up this work
in their own interest.
May be the election is round the corner,
or perhaps there is a government grant
or something which must be utilised.
What they taught us was useless.

To sign one's name means nothing.
Or to read a few words means nothing.

We agree to join the classes
If you teach us how not to depend
on others any more.

We should be able to read simple books
keep our own accounts, write a letter and
read and understand newspapers.

One more thing ----
Why do our teachers feel so superior?
They behave as if we are ignorant fools,
as if we are little children.
Please do understand that
the teacher may know things which we don't.
But, we know a lot of things which are beyond him.

We are not empty pitchers.
We have a mind of our own.
We can reason out things
and, believe it or not
we also have dignity.
Let those who will teach us
remember this.

We have enough troubles and sufferings.
Why should we add to them by
joining literacy classes?

If the learning centres can make us
feel a little more cheerful,
then we may feel an urge to
join the classes.
We are not children.
Let the teacher remember this.
Treat us like adults.
Behave with us as friends.

And yet, something more
we don't get a square meal.
We have few clothes.
We don't have a proper shelter.
And, to top it all, floods come and wash away
everything, then comes a long spell of drought
drying up everying.
Would it help us if we become literate?

Can literacy help us live
a little better? Starve a little less?
Would it guarantee that the mother
and the daughter wouldn't have to
share the same sari between them?
Would it fetch us a newly thatched roof
over our heads?

Literacy should help us live better -
at least we look at it that way.
They say that things are being planned
for us - the poor.
Would literacy help us in knowing
those government plans?

Would it help us know
how to raise our yield and increase our income?
And from where could we borrow money on easy
terms, and what benefits would we get form the
cooperatives?

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Would we get better seeds, fertiliser and all the water
we need? Would we get proper wages?
All this we think is learning for living.
They say that the new programme
promises us all this.
But, is it only writing on a scrap of paper?
Is it like one of those very many past promises
that were never kept?

Will this programme teach us
how to think and work together?
Will 'doing' be made a part of 'learning'?
If all this is done, all of us
will join the literacy classes, it will then be
learning to live a better life.

We are weak and are ill very often
Will the programme teach us
how to take care of our health, and become strong?
If it does, then we shall all come.

They say that there are laws to protect
and benefit us. We don't know these laws
we are kept in the dark
Would literacy help us know these laws?
Would we know the laws that have changed
the status of women? And the laws that
Protect the tribals amongst us?
We want a straight answer.

Then shall we decide whether
We should become literate or not
But if we find out that we are
being duped again
with empty promises,
we will stay away from you.

We will say,
'For God's sake, leave us alone'.

* bureaucrats

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1 Literacy in Canada - A Research Report. Prepared for Southam News, Ottawa, by the Creative Research Group Limited, 1987. p. 6.

2 The Right to Learn. Declaration of the Fourth UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education, Paris, 19-29 March, 1985. (Toronto: International Council for Adult Education, 1985). p. 6.

3 Notes for an address by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, on Literacy. Casa Loma, Toronto, September 8, 1988 (Ottawa: Office of the Prime Minister, 1988). p. 4 and p. 5.

4 Information in this section is derived from several sources: Adult Illiteracy in Canada (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, February 1988); the interprovincial government literacy consultation in Halifax, Nova Scotia, April 19-21, 1989; and the various News Releases from the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada.

5 The questionnaires and full findings are available in Mary Carlisle, "A Survey of Existing Literacy Programs - Initial Steps of a Provincial Needs Assessment". Report to the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee (May 1989). It is available from: The Adult Literacy Contact Centre, #622 - 510 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, V6B 1L8.

6 This was the number identified from the questionnaires as being at the 0-8 level. However, there were 269 learners identified in provincial correctional settings for whom no specific level was given. The total of 44 then is likely to be a minimum figure.

7 This information is drawn from the responses to questionnaires designed by Mary Carlisle for the needs assessment study commissioned by the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee.

8 On International Literacy Day, 1989, 25 joint federal-provincial literacy projects totalling $966,338. were announced.

9 Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, and Ministry Responsible for Science and Technology, News Release, September 8, 1989. Ref. 09.78.89, and the Minister's Speaking Notes for the Press Conference at Robson Media Centre, Vancouver, 11 a.m., September 8, 1989.

10 A fuller discussion of the community-based approach is found in Richard Darville's report prepared for the Committee. Title: Prospects for Adult Literacy Policy in British Columbia.

11 The CCC system at the Columbia Institute in Calgary, and the Learning Centre in Ottawa are written up more fully in Audrey M. Thomas (1989), Exemplary Adult Literacy Programs and Innovative Practices in Canada (see Appendix III).

12 Newsletter, Adult Literacy Contact Centre, Vol. 2, No. 4, May 1989. p. 2.

13 Employment and Immigration Canada. Success in the Works: A Policy Paper. A Labour Force Development Strategy for Canada. Ottawa, April 1989. p. 9.

14 British Columbia Ministry of the Attorney-General, Access to Justice: The Report of the Justice Reform Committee, 1988.

15 Parts of this section draw on the Darville paper mentioned above.

16 British Columbia Ministry of Education, "A Ministerial Policy on the Provision of Adult Basic Education Programs Including English Language Training in the Public Education System of British Columbia", 1982.

17 Statistics Canada. The Labour Force. December 1988. Catalogue 71-001 Monthly. Table 8.
Statistics Canada. Income Distributions by Size in Canada. 1987. Catalogue 13-207 Annual. Table 54.

18 William B. Johnston, Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century (Indianapolis: Hudson Institute, 1987). p. 97.

19 Peter Calamai, Broken Words: Why Five Million Canadians are Illiterate: A Special Southam Survey (Toronto: Southam Newspaper Group, 1987). p. 32.

20 Ibid. p. 33

21 Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy, Measuring the Costs of Illiteracy in Canada, February, 1988. p. 3.

APPENDIX I

1986 Census Data by Census Divisions for British Columbia

Material in this Appendix was
compiled by Mary Carlisle

Interpretation of Census Data

1. The figures given in the following chart were obtained from Profiles British Columbia: Part 2. Census Divisions and Subdivisions, the record of the 1986 census. All figures in the Profile have been subjected to "random rounding" to protect the confidentiality of those who provided the information. This procedure rounds all numbers to the nearest multiple of five. Totals are therefore sums of rounded numbers and are not precise.

2. Data are suppressed if the population is less than 40 persons as a further means of protecting confidentiality of the returns. As a result there are 235 Indian reserves in B.C. for which no figures are published, although the numbers are included in the totals for the census division.

3. On some Indian reserves enumeration was not permitted or was interrupted before it could be completed. In B.C. enumeration was not completed on 64 reserves. No information on population and levels of education is available for a total of 299 individual reserves.

4. Since the 1986 census, the rate of immigration has increased significantly. In 1988, 22,489 immigrants came to B.C. out of the 157,756 who arrived in Canada. This represented an 18.9 percent increase and was the largest number in the ten year period since 1978. The national projection for 1989 is between 150,000 and 160,000. For the last two years the projected figures have underestimated the actual numbers which have arrived.[1]

5. Total population for the province in 1986 was 2,883,367. Total population 15 years and over was 2,259,310 of whom 256,880 or 11.4% had less than Grade 9. The percent figure for education less than Grade 9 is based on the population over the age of 15 years in each Census Division.

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[1] Statistics supplied to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training by Canada Employment and Immigration

Census Division	Total Population	Immigrant Population	Home Language other than English		Education Less than Grade 9	
Alberni - Clayoquot	30,345	4,760	2,000	6.59%	3,545	15.4%
Bulkley - Nechako	37,470	5,385	1,245	3.32%	4,055	15.5%
Capital	264,615	10,790	8,810	3.33%	16,495	7.7%
Cariboo	59,495	7,550	3,100	5.21%	6,455	14.9%
Central Coast	3,120	280	60	1.92%	475	21.3%
Central Fraser Valley	136,890	26,100	7,025	5.13%	13,105	12.9%
Central Kootenay	49,110	6,795	1,990	4.05%	6,350	16.7%
Central Okanagan	89,730	14,995	2,995	3.34%	9,925	13.8%
Columbia - Shuswap	39,915	4,970	970	2.43%	4,385	14.2%
Comox - Strathcona	71,145	9,545	1,360	1.91%	5,795	10.7%
Cowichan Valley	52,465	8,550	1,440	2.74%	5,085	12.6%
Dewdney - Allouette	50,875	11,705	2,040	4.01%	5,365	10.6%
East Kootenay	53,085	6,075	1,190	2.24%	4,375	11.1%

Census Division	Total Population	Immigrant Population	Home Language other than English		Education Less than Grade 9	
Fraser - Cheam	57,965	9,825	2,235	3.86%	6,750	15.2%
Fraser - Fort George	89,335	11,505	3,415	3.82%	7,960	12.3%
Greater Vancouver	1,266,150	372,935	141,915	11.20%	103,410	10.1%
Kitimat - Stikine	39,485	6,585	2,245	5.68%	4,340	15.5%
Kootenay - Boundary	30,335	4,515	1,115	3.68%	3,870	16.4%
Mount Waddington	14,935	1,805	425	2.85%	1,205	11.3%
Nanaimo Regional	82,180	13,710	1,760	2.14%	6,820	10.5%
North Okanagan	54,820	7,285	1,430	2.61%	6,965	16.6%
Okanagan - Similkameen	59,085	11,070	2,350	3.98%	7,595	16.0%
Peace River - Liard	57,275	5,400	2,045	3.57%	6,260	21.4%
Powell River	18,375	3,085	515	2.80%	1,795	12.5%

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Census Division	Total Population	Immigrant Population	Home Language other than English		Education Less than Grade 9	
Skeena - Queen Charlotte	23,065	3,440	1,210	5.24%	2,520	14.9%
Squamish - Lillooet	17,890	2,855	615	3.44%	1,270	9.6%
Stikine	2,025	10	95	4.69%	155	10.8%
Sunshine Coast	16,760	2,985	215	1.28%	1,235	9.3%
Thompson - Nicola	73,240	11,680	2,830	3.86%	9,315	12.7%

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APPENDIX II

Summary by College Region of Services, Needs, and Enrolment

- Camosun
- Capilano
- Cariboo
- Douglas
- East Kootenay
- Fraser Valley
- Kwantlen
- Malaspina
- New Caledonia
- Northern Lights
- North Island
- North West
- Okanagan
- Selkirk
- Vancouver

Material in this Appendix was
compiled by Mary Carlisle

Notes on Interpretation

1. Each college region encompasses several school districts. Not all school districts are involved in literacy, ESL or ABE programming, as the program listings and the enrolment chart show.

2. The population figures are taken from the 1986 Census. College and school district boundaries do not always closely coincide with the boundaries of the Census Divisions. However, the best estimates have been made from the data available.

3. The population with less than Grade 9 figures can be compared with the provincial percentage of 11.37 and can also be compared with program offerings and enrolment figures to get some idea of relative need.

4. The programs listed are those offered by any agency in the college region.

College region: Camosun

School districts: Greater Victoria, Sooke, Saanich, Gulf Islands

Population over 15 years: 214,930

Population with less than grade nine: 16,495 Per cent: 7.67

LITERACY PROGRAMS:

Camosun College (Carey Road and Lansdowne)

Saanich School District (PALS)

Sooke School District Adult Learning Program

Victoria READ Society

ESL PROGRAMS

Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria

Camosun College (Carey Road)

Gulf Islands School District (Saltspring Island)

College region: Capilano

School districts: North Vancouver/West Vancouver, Sunshine Coast, Howe Sound

Population over 15 years: 146,680

Population with less than grade nine: 7275 Per cent: 4.95

Literacy programs:

Capilano College at Lynmour, Sechelt, and Squamish
North Vancouver/West Vancouver School District at Wm. Lucas Continuing Education Centre
Sunshine Coast Adult Learning Centre

ESL programs:

Capilano College
North Van/West Van School District
Howe Sound School District

College region: Cariboo

School districts: Cariboo-Chilcotin, North Thompson, Kamloops, Lillooet, South Caribou, Merritt

Population over 15 years: 99,650

Population with less than grade nine: 13,015 Per cent: 13

Literacy programs:

Cariboo College: Regular programs at Kamloops, Williams Lake, Merritt, 100 Mile House; short term programs at Dog Creek, Skeetchestn, Raleigh Correctional Centre, Douglas Lake, Toosey and Bonaparte

ESL programs:

Cariboo College
Kamloops Immigrant Services

Native program: Kamloops (run by Vancouver Native Education Centre Outreach)

College region: Douglas

School districts: New Westminster, Coquitlam, Maple Ridge

Population over 15 years: 153, 575

Population with less than grade nine: 12,670 Per cent: 8.25

Literacy programs:

Douglas College: classes at Maple Ridge and New Westminster
I Care program using volunteer tutors
Basic Skills Upgrading, Royal Columbian Hospital and Lakeside Program at Oakalla

New Westminster School District: New West Senior Secondary

Maple Ridge School District: Community Education Centre, Twin Maples and Alouette River Correctional Units

Coquitlam School District: Vanier and Terry Fox Senior Secondary

ESL programs:

Douglas College

New Westminster School District

Maple Ridge School District

Coquitlam School District

College region: East Kootenay

School districts: Fernie, Cranbrook, Kimberley, Windermere, Golden

Population over 15 years: 42,420

Population with less than grade nine: 7255 Per cent: 17

Literacy programs:

East Kootenay College: Cranbrook, Fernie, Creston

ESL programs:

East Kootenay College

College region: Fraser Valley

School districts: Hope, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Mission, Agassiz-Harrison

Population over 15 years: 138,530

Population with less than grade nine: 17,125 Per cent: 12.36

Literacy programs:

Fraser Valley College: Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Mission, Hope, Agassiz and federal prisons (Matsqui, Kent, Mountain, Ferndale, Elbow Lake, Regional Psychiatric Centre)

ESL programs:

Fraser Valley College

Matsqui-Abbotsford Community Service

College region: Kwantlen

School districts: Langley, Surrey, Delta, Richmond

Population over 15 years: 346,340

Population with less than grade nine: 31,210 Per cent: 9

Literacy programs:

Kwantlen College: Surrey, Richmond

Langley School District: Langley, Aldergrove, Read All About It Centre

Surrey School District: Invergarry, L. A. Matheson

Delta School District: North Delta Sr. Secondary, Delview Jr. Secondary, Delta Secondary (Ladner)

Richmond School District: Richmond Sr. Secondary, Brighouse Park

ESL programs:

Kwantlen College, Langley, Surrey, Delta, and Richmond School Districts

Surrey-Delta Immigrant Services Society

Native Programs: United Native Nations, Local 103 (run by Vancouver Native Education Centre Outreach)

College region: Malaspina

School districts: Powell River, Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Nanaimo, Qualicum

Population over 15 years: 119,300

Population with less than grade nine: 13,700 Per cent: 11.5

Literacy programs:

Malaspina College: Cowichan (class and tutor programs), Nanaimo, Powell River (class and tutor programs)

Lake Cowichan School District

ESL programs:

Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society

Cowichan Valley Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society

Native Programs:

Chemainus Native Education Centre

College region: New Caledonia

School districts: Quesnel, Burns Lake, Nechako, Prince George

Population over 15 years: 100, 415

Population with less than grade nine: 13,825 Per cent: 13.8

Literacy programs:

College of New Caledonia: Classes in Prince George, Quesnel, Mackenzie, and Burns Lake.

Volunteer tutor program (VALT) in Prince George, Quesnel, Burns Lake

Prince George School District: Prince George

Quesnel School District: Quesnel

ESL programs:

College of New Caledonia: Prince George

Prince George School District

Quesnel School District

Prince George Immigrant and Multi-cultural Services Society

Native Programs:

Prince George Native Friendship Centre

College region: Northern Lights

School districts: Peace River South, Peace River North, Fort Nelson, Stikine

Population over 15 years: 42,655

Population with less than grade nine: 6,545 Per cent: 15.3

Literacy programs:

Northern Lights College: Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Fort Nelson, Tumbler Ridge, Dease Lake, other remote communities as funding allows

ESL programs:

Northern Lights College

North Peace Multicultural Association

Native programs: Blueberry and Halfway band programs run by Vancouver Native Education Centre Outreach

College region: North Island

School districts: Alberni, Courtenay, Campbell River, Vancouver Island West, Vancouver Island North, Central Coast

Population over 15 years: 87,830

Population with less than grade nine: 10,545 Per cent: 12

Literacy programs:

North Island College: Port Alberni, Courtenay, Campbell R., Pt. Hardy/Pt.McNiell, Alert Bay/Sointula, Gold River, Kyoquot, Bella Coola

ESL programs:

North Island College

Native programs: Port Hardy and Bella Bella (run by Vancouver Native Education Centre)

College region: North West

School districts: Terrace, Nishga, Bulkley Valley, Prince Rupert, Kitimat, Queen Charlotte

Population over 15 years: 51,810

Population with less than grade nine: 7675 Per cent: 14.8

Literacy programs:

North West College: Terrace, Prince Rupert, Houston, Kitamat, Smithers, Hazelton

ESL programs:

North West College

Native Programs: Kitwancool (Gitanyou Indian School)

College region: Okanagan

School districts: Revelstoke, Shuswap, Armstrong, Vernon, Central Okanagan, Summerland, S. Okanagan, Penticton, Keremeos, Princeton

Population over 15 years: 177,680

Population with less than grade nine: 25,265 Per cent: 14.2

Literacy programs:

Okanagan College: Kelowna, Penticton, Oliver, Vernon, Salmon Arm

Project Literacy Kelowna Society

ESL programs:

Okanagan College

College region: Selkirk

School districts: Creston-Kaslo, Arrow Lakes, Trail, Grand Forks, Kettle Valley, Nelson, Castlegar

Population over 15 years: 53,190

Population with less than grade nine: 8,440 Per cent: 15.9

Literacy programs:

Selkirk College: Trail, Nelson. Store front centres in Kaslo, Nakusp, Crescent Valley, Greenwood, Midway, and Grand Forks attempt to address any learning needs which present themselves.

ESL programs:

Selkirk College

College region: Vancouver

School districts: Vancouver, Burnaby

Population over 15 years: 487,895

Population with less than grade nine: 62,705 Per cent: 12.8

Literacy programs:

Vancouver Community College: King Edward Campus, First United Church and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

Vancouver School District: John Oliver Adult Learning Centre, Roberts Adult Learning Centre, Carnegie Adult Learning Centre

Burnaby School District

The Learning Front

YES Canada

The Hewitt Group

Vancouver Native Education Centre

Native Tutoring Centre

ESL programs:

Vancouver Community College

Vancouver School District

Burnaby School District

Immigrant Services Society of B. C.

Pacific Immigrant Resources

MOSAIC

SUCCESS

OASIS

Canadian Farmworkers Union

Interpretation of Statistics for the Enrolment Chart

1. No attempt to provide grand totals has been made for several reasons:
    - there is an overlap in enrolment figures where school districts or colleges administer programs in correctional institutions or for native bands;
    - frequently college and school district enrolments are based on course rather than program registrations;
    - it is extremely difficult to equate program participation in a learning centre on a drop-in basis or in a volunteer tutor program with participation in regularly scheduled courses within an institution.

2. No two colleges or school districts seem to use the same system of gathering or recording data. The larger the institution, the more diverse are the program offerings and the more difficult it is for that institution to provide information about enrolment and participation. Definitions of full-time and part-time enrolment vary and frequently statistics are not kept by levels, i.e. literacy level enrolments cannot be separated out from other adult basic education levels. The chart summarizing enrolment in school district and college programs attempts to present the returns as accurately as possible.

Abbreviations used on the following chart

ABE	Adult Basic Education
P.T.	part time
F.T.	full-time
Int.	Intermediate
Adv.	Avanced
Prov.	Provincial
HSC	High school completion
ESL	English as a Second Language
ASE	Adult Special Education
N/A	figures not available

Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION:		CAMOSUN				CAPILANO	
Category		Camosun College	Saltspring	Saanich	Sooke	Capilano College	Howe Sound
Lit. 0-4						16	
	P.T.	35			21		
	F.T.	107			6		
Literacy 5-8		50		>150	62	72	3
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ABE Int.		873				58	6
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ABE Adv.		916				45	1
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ABE Prov. (HSC)		2,238				25	1
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
GED			15		43	10	6
ESL Beg.					11		
	P.T.	336					
	F.T.	114					
ESL Int.						44	4
	P.T.	465			1		
	F.T.	115			1		
ESL Adv.					1	44	
	P.T.	80					
	F.T.	60					
ASE		98				12	
Current numbers only					Yes		

Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION:	CAPILANO		CARIBOO	DOUGLAS			
Category	North/West Vancouver	Sunshine Coast	Cariboo	Coquitlam	Douglas College	Maple Ridge	New West.
Lit. 0-4	15	15	57	N/A			15
P.T.					80		
F.T.					10		
Literacy 5-8	70	5		N/A			15
P.T.							
F.T.							
ABE Int.			387	N/A		145	100
P.T.					81		
F.T.					254		
ABE Adv.			531	N/A			100
P.T.							
F.T.							
ABE Prov. (HSC)			869	N/A		493	12
P.T.							
F.T.							
GED	200		119	70		90	see Adv.
ESL Beg.	500			142	N/A	19	80
P.T.							
F.T.							
ESL Int.	650		68	102	N/A	21	80
P.T.							
F.T.							
ESL Adv.	375		50	55	N/A	15	30
Current numbers only							
ASE	40		64		N/A		
Current numbers only			course registrations per year				

Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION: EAST KOOTENAY ——— KWANTLEN ———

Category		East Kootenay College	Delta	Kwantlen College	Langley	Richmond	Surrey
Lit. 0-4		32	160		20	54	500
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
Literacy 5-8			130				
	P.T.			15	20		
	F.T.			15	50		
ABE Int.		40	80	N/A		N/A	
	P.T.				20		
	F.T.				60		
ABE Adv.		200	600	N/A		N/A	
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ABE Prov. (HSC)		250		N/A		N/A	
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
GED			60		40	N/A	N/A
ESL Beg.		44	200	18	50		630
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ESL Int.			100	18	40		
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ESL Adv.			100		25		
	P.T.						
	F.T.						
ASE			58	N/A		N/A	
Current numbers only							

Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION: FRASER VALLEY ——— MALASPINA ——— - NEW CALEDONIA -

Category		F.V. College	Lake Cowichan	— Malaspina College —			College of New. Cal.	Quesnel
				Cowichan	Nanaimo	Powell River		
Lit. 0-4		100		20				24
	P.T.				40		57	
	F.T.				30		70	
Literacy 5-8			1				295	58
	P.T.	189		20		4		
	F.T.	35		30		8		
ABE Int.			1		N/A		426	15
	P.T.	209		30		3		
	F.T.	96		36		15		
ABE Adv.			12		N/A		432	
	P.T.	139		25		10		
	F.T.	53		50		25		
ABE Prov. (HSC)			2	16	N/A		144	72
	P.T.							
	F.T.							
GED		148	3	29		25	275	104
ESL Beg.				15	N/A		29	15
	P.T.	175						
	F.T.	35						
ESL Int.					N/A		18	8
	P.T.					6		
	F.T.							
ESL Adv.				15	N/A			
	P.T.	90						
	F.T.	18						
ASE		311		30		24	46	
Current numbers only								Yes

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Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION:	NEW CALEDONIA	NORTHERN LIGHTS	NORTH ISLAND	NORTH WEST	OKANAGAN	SELKIRK
Category	Prince George	Nthn.Lights College	Nth.Is. College	N-W College	Okanagan College	Selkirk College
Lit. 0-4	15		30			45
P.T.				10	50	
F.T.		27		60	6	
Literacy 5-8	50		159			
P.T.				20	50	
F.T.				60	18	
ABE Int.	50	54	328			150
P.T.				50		
F.T.				60		
ABE Adv.	10		477			150
P.T.				50	700	
F.T.				30	200	
ABE Prov. (HSC)	80	28	478			180
P.T.				30		
F.T.				15		
GED	35	30	248	50		
ESL Beg.	20			50		30
P.T.		10				
F.T.		7				
ESL Int.				40	32	5
P.T.	20	6	100			
F.T.	20	3				
ESL Adv.				40		
P.T.		2				38
F.T.		4				20
ASE		53		32	70	

Current numbers only

Enrolment in College and School District Programs

REGION: VANCOUVER

Category		King Edward Campus	Vancouver School District	Burnaby School District
Lit. 0-4	P.T.	93	-	176
	F.T.	167		
Literacy 5-8	P.T.		- 3462 (incl GED)	
	F.T.			
ABE Int.	P.T.		-	51
	F.T.			60
ABE Adv.	P.T.	511	- 2672	814
	F.T.	763		60
ABE Prov. (HSC)	P.T.		-	
	F.T.			
GED				108
ESL Beg.	P.T.		-	400
	F.T.			
ESL Int.	P.T.	2,748	- 6405	300
	F.T.	792		
ESL Adv.	P.T.		-	200
	F.T.			
ASE		50	N/A	0

Current numbers only

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APPENDIX III

Exemplary Adult Literacy Programs and Innovative Practices in Canada

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Note: A publication of this title prepared by Audrey M. Thomas for the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee is available from:

Provincial Curriculum Publications
c/o Open Learning Agency, Marketing Department
P.O. Box 94,000, Richmond, B.C. V6Y 2A2
Telephone: (604) 660-2190 Fax: (604) 660-2272
Order Number: VA0104

Program Selections for Case-Study:

Basic Education, Vancouver Community College
I-CARE, Douglas College, New Westminster
Invergarry Learning Centre, Surrey
Calgary Catholic Schools
Regina Public Library
Beat the Street, Frontier College, Toronto and Regina
English in the Working Environment, Kitchener-Waterloo
Metro Labour Education and Skills Training Centre, Toronto
Basic Education for Skills Training (BEST) - Ontario
East End Literacy, Toronto
Kingston Literacy
Columbia Institute of Canada Inc., Calgary
The Learning Centre, Ottawa
ALSO Works, Ottawa
Humber Hotline, Humber College, Toronto
Multilingual Literacy Centre, Toronto
Independent Learning Centre, Ontario
Reading and Writing for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Adults, Ottawa
Ontario Native Literacy Programs

Innovations - Practices and Ideas That Work

- Walk-in numeracy centre.
- Walk-in storefront literacy information and referral centre in downtown.
- Walk-in storefront classroom and resource centre in shopping mall.
- Fieldworker employed to go to street hang-outs to make contact with potential clients to come to storefront literacy operation.
- Fieldworker employed to frequent soup kitchen to talk to clients and help them with specific short-term literacy tasks.
- Peer tutoring arrangements:
  - Natives teaching Natives;
  - Union members teaching union members;
  - Street people teaching street people.
- Branch libraries in rural areas used as literacy contact points for requests for tutors and for materials.
- Development of a multilingual literacy centre for training volunteer tutors to teach literacy in mother tongues.
- A literacy van making regular circuits of rural, isolated communities, to deliver tutoring and do public awareness.
- Family literacy projects:
  - parents as learners;
  - for mothers and children in housing units;
  - for immigrant women and their pre-schoolers - bilingual/bicultural integration;
  - in elementary schools where parents of attending children need help;
  - reading circles with mothers and children during summer holidays.
- Literacy program workers arrange series of workshops for literate parents on helping their children learn to read.
- Use of Country and Western Music to teach literacy in group setting.
- Reading Evenings where new literates read their work to others and others capture the essence of the theme in a paper mural.
- Students script and develop their own play for public awareness.
- Student groups meet regularly to:
  - discuss topics of interest;
  - make plans for social events or visits to other student groups;
  - publish their material or produce a newsletter.

- Book launch held to celebrate new authors - social event with attending celebrity.
- Celebrity book auctions as a fund-raiser.
- A group of learners decide to get off welfare and start their own business.
- A community college contracts out to existing literacy groups to deliver training for the college.
- Community groups affiliate with a community college and, for payment of a small fee, have access to college services and personnel - counselling, professional development, newsletter, certification of learners, etc.
- Business and industry, made aware of basic literacy needs in the workplace, ask the programmers for help in designing workshops/courses addressing total company communication needs.
- Use of computer and word processing packages to develop tailor-made curriculum.
- Use of computer technology and telephone data lines to provide programs to remote sites.
- Computerized telephone tutor with ready-made exercises.
- Network of social agencies and educational institutions join together to define literacy needs and start new programs.
- Culturally-based literacy training among Native groups:
    - traditional dances used as vehicle for literacy training;
    - oral history projects, etc.